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**A MEMOIR**  
**OF**  
**CHARLES JAMES BLOMFIELD, D.D.**  
  
**VOL. II.**

LONDON:  
PRINTED BY R. CLAY, SON, AND TAYLOR,  
BREAD-STREET HILL.

+

A MEMOIR  
OF  
CHARLES JAMES BLOMFIELD, D.D.

*BISHOP OF LONDON,*

WITH SELECTIONS FROM HIS CORRESPONDENCE.

EDITED BY HIS SON,

ALFRED BLOMFIELD, M.A.

FELLOW OF ALL SOULS' COLLEGE, OXFORD; AND INCUMBENT OF ST. PHILIP'S,  
STEPNEY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. II.

WITH A PORTRAIT.

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# A MEMOIR OF BISHOP BLOMFIELD.

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THE "TRACTS FOR THE TIMES"—CORRESPONDENCE—RUBRICAL OBSERVANCE—AUTHORITY OF THE MINISTRY—BISHOP STANLEY AND CLERICAL SUBSCRIPTION—PUBLICATION OF TRACT XC.—VIEWS OF BISHOP BLOMFIELD ON IT—ROMANIZING TENDENCY OF THE TRACT-WRITERS—SERMONS ON THE CHURCH.

No history of the Church of England in the first half of the nineteenth century, should such a work ever be written, can pretend to any completeness, which does not give a very full account of the origin, rise, and progress of what is commonly known as the "Tractarian" movement. For the purposes of the present work, it will be sufficient to notice those parts of it with which the subject of this biography was most immediately brought into contact.

The publication of the 'Tracts for the Times,' originating with a knot of zealous Churchmen, alarmed by the troublous aspect of the days which preceded and followed the Reform Bill agitation, did not, for some few years, create any great excitement, or bring many

new questions before the Bishops for their decision. But as early as 1837, Bishop Blomfield's correspondence shows the first trace of the effect of the Tracts; and it will be well, as an introduction to what was, perhaps, the most stormy period of the Bishop's life, to quote at some length from his letters at this time, in order to illustrate his views on the questions which now came into prominence.

*To a Clergyman of the Diocese.—Rules with regard to Sponsors.*

“EAST COWES CASTLE, Oct. 10, 1834.

“DEAR SIR,—It is undoubtedly true that, according to the rules of our Church, other persons than the parents ought to be sponsors for children presented at the font. The Rubric requires it by implication, and the Canon in express terms; and all possible efforts should be used to bring the people to a compliance with this rule. But I do not think that a clergyman would in *every* case be at liberty to refuse baptism to an infant because the proper number of sponsors was not complete, independently of the parents. Cases may be imagined in which the parents might not be able, with all their endeavours, to find persons willing to become sponsors for their children; and it will hardly be maintained that admission into the Church of Christ should therefore be denied to the children if the parents themselves will undertake the office of sponsors. It seems to me that the right course to pursue is, to be as strict in your observance of this rule as you find it possible to be, so as not to refuse the sacrament where the parents are unable to procure proper persons as sponsors. If the parents themselves are religious people, and have no religious friends to undertake the office, I should say

that this was almost equivalent to their being unable to obtain sponsors.

It is essentially necessary to the infant to be baptized; it is not essential to baptism that there should be sponsors (for there are none where infants are privately baptized, and die without being received into the Church). It is clear, therefore, that baptism ought not to be denied to a child whose parents cannot obtain sponsors. The rule that none but communicants are to be admitted as sponsors is enjoined by the Canon, not by the Rubric. It is a very good rule, because no person who habitually neglects one sacrament can be properly disposed for bearing an important part in the other. But where the rule has been neglected, I think the people should be brought to the observance of it by degrees, after a course of instruction and exhortation, private as well as public, rather than by a sudden and peremptory regulation.

With respect to the *time* of administering baptism, the practice ought to be uniform except in cases of necessity—as, for instance, where an infant cannot safely remain in Church longer than just during the administration of the rite. Where the font is so placed that the clergyman can be seen and heard, and where he performs the service in a solemn manner, and occasionally explains it to his people, the observance of the Rubric will be found to produce the best effects.”

---

*A Clergyman cannot be blamed for adhering to the Rubric.*

“LONDON HOUSE, Feb. 16, 1837.

“.... I have inquired into the grounds of your complaint against Mr. —; and although there may have been, occasionally, some quickness of manner on his part,



and a more rigid adherence to what he believed to be the line of his duty than was agreeable to some of the parishioners, I cannot discover that he has done anything to justify your dismissing him from the curacy....

The omission of a collect before the sermon—though not customary, nor, in my opinion, advisable—may be justified as legal. Upon this point I will consult Mr. ——. The practice of returning to the Communion Table after the Service, and reading the prayer for Church Militant, &c., although unusual in country churches, is strictly in accordance with the directions of the Rubric.

Mr. —, I believe, would have no objection to quit his present curacy if another were offered to him; but I cannot consent to his being dismissed for having performed his duty in a manner which has given offence to some chiefly from its close adherence to the rules of the Church. I have every reason to think well of him as a conscientious and diligent young man, although I deem it probable that the warmth of his manner may have sometimes afforded ground for complaint. He is endeavouring, to the best of his judgment, to instruct the poor people of the parish in the way which the Church has prescribed; and I hope that the friends of the Church will be induced to co-operate with him, laying aside all resentment for past occurrences, so that when he *does* leave the parish he may do it in friendship with all.”

---

*To the Clergyman referred to in the last.*

“LONDON HOUSE, Feb. 17, 1837.

“.... I send you a copy of a letter which I have written to Mr. —.

With respect to the use of a prayer before sermon, you are, no doubt, aware of the *political* reasons for the

Royal Direction to which you allude. I can hardly advise the use of the Bidding Prayer in country churches, especially where the prayer for the Church Militant is read; but I do not think it seemly that *no* prayer at all should precede the sermon: and as the Rubric before the occasional collects at the end of the Communion Service may, perhaps, be construed so as to authorize the use of them before the sermon, I think it advisable that one of them, with the Lord's Prayer, should be so used. Ascending the pulpit to lecture or preach before the end of the Service, although it is done in some cathedrals, is unusual, and had better not be done. ...."

---

*The Validity of Lay-Baptism defended.*

"LONDON HOUSE, Sept. 25, 1837.

".... I need not tell you that the question of the validity of lay-baptism formed the subject of a celebrated controversy in the last century, between Dr. Waterland and Mr. Kelsall, which is contained in the tenth volume of Waterland's Works. Dr. Waterland, who argues against the validity of lay-baptism, admits that the Church of England has nowhere expressly and in terms determined the controversy either way; but he says she has laid down such principles and positions as will bring us to his conclusion. I do not think that he proves his point. Had our Reformers considered lay-baptism to be absolutely invalid, they would undoubtedly have said so in express terms, seeing that the question of admission or non-admission into the Church of Christ depended upon the decision. So far was the Church from impugning, in all cases, the validity of lay-baptism, that a service was provided for the administration of baptism to infants by laymen, or even midwives, in case

of necessity ; and it was only in compliance with the scruples expressed by King James I., at the Hampton Court Conference, that the Rubric was altered so as to confine the administration of private baptism to the clergy. At that conference Bishop Bancroft maintained that the framers of the Common Prayer intended to permit private persons to baptize in case of necessity ; and Bishop Bilson affirmed that to deny this were to cross all antiquity, seeing that it had been the ancient and common practice of the Church, when ministers at such times could not be got, and that it was a rule agreed upon amongst divines that the minister is not of the essence of the sacrament. To which the King acutely replied, ‘ Though he be not of the essence of the sacrament, yet is he of the essence of the right and lawful ministry of the sacrament.’ And this I conceive to be the opinion held by the Fathers of our Church : that the administration of baptism by a layman in case of absolute necessity is lawful ; that where no such necessity exists, such administration is unlawful and irregular, but that the baptism itself is not invalid. . . .”

---

*To a College Tutor.—Testimonials for Holy Orders need not be refused to one who holds that the Ministry has no Authority except from the Law of the Land.*

“LONDON, Oct. 9, 1837.

“ . . . My opinion is, that the compilers of our Articles have taken for granted the Divine authority of Christian ministers episcopally ordained (in a qualified sense however), but that they purposely avoided asserting it in such precise terms as would have appeared to condemn as defective the foreign Protestant Churches.

It is stated in the Twenty-sixth Article, that ‘ those who have authority in the ministration of the Word and

Sacraments do not the same in their own name, but in Christ's, and do minister by His commission and authority.' It must be a very circuitous and improbable fetch, by which these words can be explained to mean nothing more than authority derived from the magistrate. The whole tenor of our Ordination Services is utterly inconsistent with such a notion. In the form, 'Take thou authority to preach the Word of God, and to minister the holy sacraments, in the congregation *where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto*,' a distinction is clearly drawn between the authority of orders conveyed by the imposition of hands, by which the priest is empowered to preach and to minister the sacraments, and the authority, whether of the magistrate or of the Bishop acting with that sanction, to limit the exercise of his functions to a certain congregation. To a person holding the notion to which you allude, a great part of our Ordination Service must appear to be a mere empty form. He must understand them in a much lower sense than that in which I think they were intended to be understood, and than the words themselves will bear.

But, with all this, I am not so sure that the dogma of the divine authority of the ministry can be absolutely said to be a *doctrine* of the Church of England, in the sense in which the word doctrine is used in Letters Testimonial. A doctrine is properly that which is expressly *taught*, and I imagine the doctrines referred to in Letters Testimonial are those which are precisely and in terms laid down in our Articles. So that, although I should certainly hesitate myself before I testified my belief that a person not believing in the divine authority of the ministry held no opinions at variance with those of the Church, I can conceive of a person signing a declaration to that effect with a clear conscience. If he holds, with Bishop Bilson and other great divines, that



the minister is not of the essence of the sacrament, and that lay-baptism, though irregular, is not invalid, he will naturally infer that the framers of our Articles although they themselves believed in the Divine commission of the Christian ministry, did not think it necessary to make that belief a *sine quâ non*, nor to give the notion itself a place amongst the essential articles of Christian faith. Whether the compilers of our Liturgy would have practised the same forbearance admits of question. I am afraid this answer to your inquiry will not be very satisfactory, but I can give no better."

---

*To a Clergyman, on using the Sign of the Cross.*

"LONDON, July 6, 1838.

"REV. SIR,—I do not suspect you of an inclination to Popery, but I blame you for using a ceremony which the Church of Rome 'has greatly abused' (Canon 30) by its superstitious employment of it, and which, therefore, the Church of England has laid aside, except in the Sacrament of Baptism, where it has retained the sign of the cross; and even for the use of it in that sacrament, as having given offence, it has thought it necessary to make an elaborate apology. The use of this sign on other occasions has, ever since the Reformation, been one marked distinction between the Protestant and Popish clergy; and as it is nowhere *directed* to be used, and as the 30th Canon clearly supposes it not to be used, except in the administration of baptism (and even there it is no part of the *sacrament*), it is, to say the least of it, very injudicious and unwise for any clergyman of our Church to resume a practice purposely discontinued by our Reformers; and it is very presumptuous in a deacon

to take such a step without consulting his bishop, and still more so to tell him, when he is informed of his objections, that 'his opinion is quite contrary to that of St. Basil.'

With respect to the 'Authority of the Holy Catholic Church,' you will be pleased to remember that, as a minister of that branch of it which is planted in this realm, you are to submit to the authority of *that* branch, and to conform to its discipline and formularies. As to 'a moderate use' of the sign of the cross, is every clergyman to erect his own standard of moderation? Or is any clergyman at liberty to use ceremonies which the Church has not prescribed, except those which the unvarying practice of the Church has sanctioned?

But whatever may be your opinions on this point, I do not hesitate to lay my injunctions upon you to abstain from using this, or any other ceremony, form, or gesture, in the performance of any of the offices of the Church, different from the established practice of the Church; and I am obliged to inform you, that, unless I am better satisfied with your proceedings than I am at present, I shall feel great scruples about admitting you to Priest's Orders. There is one expression in your letter which leads me to inquire of you, whether you hold the signing with the sign of the cross to be an essential part of the Sacrament of Baptism?"

---

*Meaning of the word "Oblations" in the Communion Service.*

"FULHAM, Dec. 9, 1839.

"I have to thank you for your letter, and the extracts which accompanied it. The evidence which you have produced, in support of the opinion which supposes the

word *oblations*, in the prayer for the Church Militant, to refer to the bread and wine, is certainly very strong; but I am not quite convinced. Hamon L'Estrange, who published his 'Alliance of Divine Offices' before the last revision of the Liturgy, says: 'Our Church intended a double offering—one, eleemosynary alms for the poor; another, oblatory for the maintenance of the clergy.' And it seems to me, that, in order to make this clearer, the words 'and oblations' were added at the last revision. If this be not so, what notice is taken of the 'other devotions of the people,' which the Rubric directs to be received in a decent bason and humbly *presented* on the table? You will observe that the priest is not directed to *present* the bread and wine, but simply to *place* them on the table. The marginal rubric, which directs the omission of the words 'alms and oblations' (not of the word 'alms,' or of the word 'oblations,' but of the whole clause), seems to me a strong argument against the notion that *oblations* mean the bread and wine, because a case may be conceived where there are no alms, and yet the Sacrament is administered. The bread and wine are provided by the parish under legal compulsion, and can, therefore, hardly be called their offering to God. It must, however, be acknowledged that this reasoning applies to so much of the offerings for the clergy as are 'accustomably due' at Easter. Another argument may be drawn from the fact, that when all the consecrated elements have been used, and more are brought and placed on the table, there is no *oblation* of them.

The persons who have maintained this oblation of the bread and wine are, for the most part, those who have maintained the notion of a material sacrifice of the Eucharist. But surely, if the elements are *offered* at all, it must be when they are offered in sacrifice,

and not before! The two notions appear to me to be inconsistent with each other. Upon the whole, I am still of Waterland's opinion, that in the 'ante-oblation there is a presenting to God of alms for the poor, and oblations for the use of the Church. The material things are gifts to men; the benevolent act or work is a gift or sacrifice unto God.' (*Works*, vol. viii. p. 221.)

I may add, that if the bread and wine were the oblations, there would surely have been some sentence inserted in the offertory, alluding to that kind of offering; but there is none. Bishop Andrewes, if I recollect right, had suggested some appropriate sentences of Scripture. Furthermore, if the bread and wine be an oblation, the offering of them, one would think, must be an essential part of the eucharistic rite; but that it is not so considered by our Church, appears from its being entirely omitted in the Communion of the Sick. . . ."

---

*The Authority of the Clergy must not be too strongly stated.*

"LONDON HOUSE, May 23, 1840.

"I have read your sermon with great attention: I am sorry I cannot add, with equal satisfaction. I am not prepared to say, with Mr. —, that it contains any statement of doctrine directly opposed to the Articles of our Church; but it certainly does appear to me to *look away* from them, and to be hardly consistent with the general spirit of our formularies. The faith upon which you insist is different, at least as to its objects, from that which St. Paul speaks of in the words of your text. I think that sufficient stress has not been laid, for a long period, upon the

authority of the Church ; but I should be sorry to see the general prevalence of any such desire, as is evinced in your sermon, to exalt that of the clergy, and to attribute to ritual observances, not possessing the requisites which, according to the definition of our Church, are necessary to constitute a Sacrament, a sacramental efficacy. I have noted a few of my objections on the blank pages of your sermon, to which I may add my opinion, that you ought not to speak of a large, and certainly a laborious and devoted, body of our brethren by the contemptuous appellation of religionists ; and that your claim of *submission* on the part of the laity to the clergy ought to be very carefully guarded and explained. . . .”

---

*How the Rubric is to be observed by Clergymen officiating on the Continent.*

“LONDON, May 24, 1842.

“.... The Rubric should be observed by the clergy of our Church wheresoever they officiate, as far as is practicable under the circumstances of their position, which may, in some cases, render a strict compliance with it impossible. With respect to your particular queries :

1. I do not consider that a chaplain officiating in a foreign country is bound to read Morning and Evening Prayers publicly every day. He is, of course, free to do so if he thinks fit. If he can bring together a congregation, it may be advisable ; if not, I think that no advantage would result to the Church from his doing so.

2. I think that the feasts and other holy days should be observed, and notice thereof given after the Nicene Creed.

3. The Rubric undoubtedly requires the officiating

minister to offer up the prayer for the Church Militant. This practice has been disused in most of our churches, but not in our cathedrals, nor in the Chapel Royal. I think that in a foreign country, especially in a Roman Catholic country, it is right to act up to the Church's intentions in this respect. Whatever part of the service is read at the Holy Table must be read in a surplice.

I do not think it necessary that a collection should always be made, although one or more sentences for the offertory must be read ; but I should be glad to see this custom generally revived, as being the fittest mode of asking for the benevolence of the congregation.

4. It is directed that the clergy shall administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper so often and at such times as that every parishioner may communicate *at the least* thrice in the year (Canon 21), which implies an administration oftener than three times a year, but not every week. But there is nothing to *prevent* a weekly Communion, if it be thought desirable. Upon that question I entertain some doubt. I think you will do well to adhere to your present practice. . . .

7. The elements of bread and wine ought to be brought and placed upon the Holy Table, when and as the Rubric directs; but as no direction is given as to where they shall be before they are so brought, it is not material *whence* they are brought, so that it be from some decent place. It is the custom of the Greek Church, but not of ours, to have a credence or prothesis. The priest is directed to place the alms and oblations on the table 'humbly,' which may be thought to imply some *gesture* of humility. The direction is not repeated with reference to the bread and wine.

8. The consecrated elements are not to be given to more than one communicant at a time, except where it is impossible, by reason of numbers, to administer them singly."

*Unjustifiable to refuse Parish Allotments to Dissenters.*

“FULHAM, Nov. 19, 1842.

“MY DEAR SIR,—I am far from disputing the position that Dissenters can have no claim to any benefit from that which is the property of the Church; nor do I question the propriety of withholding from them the favour which you grant to members of the Church: but that which is in principle right, may be so done as to become wrong; and this seems to me to have been the case with your proceedings respecting the allotments. You appear not to have made any allowance for the peculiar circumstances of the parish, the inhabitants of which had been for forty years so grievously neglected, that it is a wonder they were not *all* confirmed Dissenters. Looking to this, and to their want of knowledge, it was obviously a case which required to be treated with a gentle hand—one in which the people were to be led rather than driven back into the pasture, which they had quitted for lack of food; nor do I doubt, from what had been effected in that way during ——’s short incumbency, that, in the course of a few years, Dissent would have been nearly, if not quite, extinguished in that parish. I am very much mistaken (I hope I may be) if you have not given it vigour and perpetuity. . . .

. . . . My conviction is, that the effect of your requiring ‘a *written* promise of never again entering a meeting-house’ (which I, if I had been one of them, would never have signed), has been to take from nineteen or twenty families, many of them good Church-people, a great part of their means of subsistence in a wretchedly poor district, and to deprive yourself of a powerful means of correcting evil-doers and rewarding honest industry. The Dissenting Sunday-school had entirely ceased. It is now revived and flourishing.

Your requiring a written promise was plainly an affront to the conscientious Churchmen, and a trap to the thoughtless and ignorant. What you should aim at is, not to make men promise to come to Church, but to convince them of the duty of doing so. . . .”

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The questions agitated in these letters refer, for the most part, to ritual rather than to doctrine; but Bishop Blomfield, at an early period, was not unobservant of the peculiar doctrinal tendencies which reached their highest development in the concluding Tracts. He wrote to the Bishop of Calcutta, in 1839:—

“I have read your last Charge with great interest and satisfaction, and approve of your remarks upon the Oxford Tract-writers, who are, to my mind, corrupting the simplicity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the Scriptural character of our own Church, as far as it can be affected by the writings of any of her individual members. God be praised, we have our Articles and Liturgy, which those writers can never torture into speaking their own language! At the same time, it must be admitted that they have placed many points concerning the Church’s authority and office in a striking point of view, and have done much to counteract the evil effects of that low Church spirit which has of late years weakened the Church and encouraged the Dissenters. It is the lot of our condition here that evil shall always be mixed with good: we must endeavour to turn the latter to account, and to counteract the former.”

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Meanwhile, an occasion occurred which showed that Bishop Blomfield was not more disposed to make any large concessions to the Latitudinarian party than to



the Tractarian. In May, 1840, Archbishop Whately presented a petition to Parliament, signed by a small number of clergymen<sup>1</sup> and others, praying the House to consider "what measures should be adopted to render the letter of our Prayer-Book, and the Subscription to our Articles and Liturgy, consistent with the practice of our clergy and the acknowledged meaning of our Church." The prayer of this petition was not supported by its presenter, who contented himself with drawing the attention of the House to the want of some representative assembly of the Church to deal with subjects of this kind. Bishop Stanley, of Norwich, however, took up the cause of the discontented Churchmen, whom he described as persons "of scrupulous and tender consciences;" and recommended the House "honestly and boldly to meet the difficulties of the case, not only because the Church was founded upon liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment, but because it gave the greatest—he would not say latitude, but—privilege of private judgment."

There was something in the tone and spirit of Bishop Stanley's speech which was peculiarly irritating to Bishop Blomfield. He rose, and with unusual severity rebuked both the petition and its supporter. He should not have entered into the discussion, he said, if it were not for the observations which had escaped the right reverend prelate, unaccustomed to address their Lordships in the heat of debate, which were little less than a libel on the Church. He would begin by noticing a remarkable

<sup>1</sup> With one of these clergymen Bishop Blomfield had already been in correspondence on the subject of Subscription. See letter, vol. i. p. 173.

sentiment to have fallen from a Christian clergyman. He had heard the right reverend prelate say, that the Church was founded on liberty of conscience. It was practically the fact, that the Protestant Church permitted as great a degree of liberty of conscience as was consistent with the interests of religion; but he had always understood that the Catholic Church was founded on truth; that the Church was the authorized interpreter of the words of truth, and that she would desert her duty if she did not lay down, for the good of the people, the great truths which were extracted from the Bible. After declaring that, in his opinion, there was no general dissatisfaction among the clergy on the subject of subscription, but the reverse, and quoting the authority of Burke against the Feathers' Tavern Petition, of 1772, he asked, "What was the expansion required? It was this: that when a clergyman declared *ex animo*, he should be understood as declaring only in what sense he pleased. This was expansion with a vengeance; an expansion which did not partake of that prudent elasticity which, though always ready to accommodate itself to the peculiarities of our infirm and imperfect nature, would never stretch beyond the line of truth, nor sacrifice that which was just and true, to meet the maudlin scruples of any conscience whatever. And if one tender conscience was to be relieved, why not another? Where was the system of change to be stayed? If their Lordships were to set out upon the principle of satisfying all, they would soon have no peculiarity of doctrine, no articles, no liturgy, but would reduce the Church to a mere naked *caput mortuum*, neither satisfying the con-

sciences of men here, nor offering a sound foundation on which to base their hopes of hereafter. Therefore, he strongly deprecated their Lordships' tampering in any degree with matters of this kind."

An eye-witness remarked that the Bishop's manner in uttering the words last quoted seemed to show that, in his opinion, the petition before the House was a thing which it was a pollution even to touch. Bishop Stanley afterwards published his speech, with notes, in which he endeavoured to prove, by quotations from Bishop Blomfield's Charge, of 1834, that he had once entertained a different opinion on the subject of subscription. To this Bishop Blomfield wrote and printed a reply; but thinking, perhaps, that such a disagreement between brother prelates should not be carried further, he did not publish it.

When the Oxford movement came to a crisis, in the publication of the famous Tract No. 90, early in 1841, the Bishop of London was occupying so conspicuous a position in the eyes of Churchmen, as to make it natural that his opinion should be asked and his judgment quoted, even though he was not called upon to interfere publicly in the matter. His opinion on the Tract was first extracted by a clergyman resident at Oxford, to whom he wrote thus:—

"LONDON HOUSE, *March 11, 1841.*

"I thank you for sending me the Tract for the Times, which I had before seen, and the Letter, which I had not seen. I hope that many more of the tutors and men of weight in the university will protest against this most extraordinary publication, which, however painful as it is to think of as the production

of an English clergyman, will do good, I should think, by opening the eyes of some of the young men who have taken up the opinions of the Tractarians, to the lengths to which those opinions are likely to lead them. I doubt, however, whether it be expedient that the Heads of Houses should take up the matter as one of official cognizance. . . .

P. S. It is really hardly possible to believe that the writer of such a Tract can be of the Reformed Church."

The protest of the four Tutors, to which the Bishop here alludes as already issued, was quickly followed by the censure of the Heads of Houses, which he deprecates. In the controversy which ensued, the weight of Bishop Blomfield's name was used against the Tract; and he was in correspondence with some of those who were most active in the strife, endeavouring, as far as he could, to allay agitation and prevent further evil consequences.

The following letters will best illustrate the views and proceedings of the Bishop at this time :—

"LONDON HOUSE, *March 22, 1841.*

"The censure put forth by the Heads is so cautiously worded, that I am not sorry at its having been issued. I am rejoiced to learn that the matter is not likely to go any further. If unhappily it should, I hardly think it will be possible to avoid the necessity of some more important and decisive step. . . .

You must excuse my freedom if I say that I cannot perceive any obligation of Christian duty which binds us to defend the *errors* of those whom we justly reverence

in so far as they teach the *truth*. On the contrary, the more they are to be praised as maintainers of the truth, the more firmly, though charitably, ought they to be withstood, if at any time they promulgate erroneous doctrine; it being manifest that their general adherence to what is right makes their occasional assertion or defence of what is wrong all the more dangerous. I am pained to think that you will henceforth be identified, as I fear you will be, as to opinions, with the writers of the Tracts for the Times.

The more I reflect upon the 90th number of these Tracts, the more dangerous does its tendency appear to me. . . . I hope you will use all your influence to persuade the writers of the Tracts to publish no more of them. . . .”

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“LONDON HOUSE, *March 22, 1841.*

“Your letter has given me very great pleasure, on two accounts; first, because I learn from it that Mr. Newman is sensible of the fault which he has committed in putting forth the Tract No. 90; and secondly and principally, because it gives me grounds for believing that the controversy will not be continued, at least in such a shape as to cause a schism in the Church. I must, however, fairly say that the Tract itself, intended, as it seems, to prevent a schism, was, in my judgment, eminently calculated to produce one. Respecting its dangerous tendency I have heard but one opinion: I have, however, all along doubted the advisableness of an official censure by persons in authority; although I was, I confess, not sorry to see the protest of the Tutors; and now that the cautionary notice from the Heads has appeared I see no reason to wish that it had not been issued.

. . . . I beg you to assure Mr. Newman of the high respect which I feel for his piety and talents; and that

till the publication of this unfortunate Tract, although I disapproved of *many* points in the earlier numbers, I had done all I could to prevent public discussion, and to prevent any explosion. It will still be my endeavour to do so; but it will not be possible for me to persevere in that course if any more such Tracts should be published."

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"LONDON, *March* 23, 1841.

"There is no intention of passing any episcopal sentence upon Mr. Newman's Tract; that is to say, the Bishops will not do so synodically. What individual bishops may think fit to say in their charges, or otherwise, I do not know. But if the Tracts go on, I doubt whether we shall be able to refrain much longer; and therefore I am earnest in wishing that they may be discontinued. Enough, and more than enough, has been done by them to call attention to the principles of the Church; they have shed a light upon some important questions, sometimes indeed flickering, and sometimes lurid; but if they proceed they will kindle a flame. Even now it has been found necessary to bring out the engines; and there has been some danger of not being able to extinguish the fire without pulling down a part of the house. . . .

What you say of a number of serious young men who might probably go over to the Church of Rome if Mr. Newman were openly censured, is very alarming. It may surely suggest to Mr. Newman's conscience, and that of his fellow-labourers the question, Who has *prepared* them for that step? Who has trained them up to think that they can remain in the Church of England no longer than her Articles can be strained to symbolize with the doctrines of Rome? It is to my mind the greatest evidence possible of the evil tendencies of the Oxford

Tracts, that they should have made it necessary for Mr. Newman to put forth such a commentary on our Articles in order to prevent his disciples from becoming papists.

I trust that God in His mercy will overrule this false step to the good of His Church, and that we shall not be disturbed by open dissension among ourselves, upon points of vital moment, at a time when unity and concord are more than ever required by the external relations of the Church."

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"BURY ST. EDMUNDS, *April 14, 1841.*

"... I was glad to hear, a short time since, that the agitation which had been occasioned by the Tract No. 90, was likely to subside, and that the announcement made by Mr. Newman, of the intended discontinuance of the Tracts, was considered to be a concession calculated to produce that desirable result.

But I am now informed that there is not so much tendency to subsidence as I had hoped. I am extremely desirous that no further controversy should be raised at the present moment. Individuals on both sides will of course give utterance to their opinions, which I trust may be done temperately and charitably; but I strongly deprecate anything like a combined effort to put down the supporters of the Tract writers, after what has been already done—although I perceive that some of them, on their part, are less prudent and guarded than they ought to be. Enough has been done to direct the attention of the Church to what is dangerous or questionable in the Tracts, and more, no doubt, will be done by repeated discussions; but it would be most injurious to the Church that parties should be more distinctly separated *from*, and ranged *against*, each other than they now are. The errors, whether of doctrine or discipline, which are imputed to Mr. Newman and his friends, may

now, I think, be left to the vigilance and discretion of the bishops. I have given this advice to the friends as well as to the opponents of Mr. Newman ; and I know that others, whose opinions are entitled to greater consideration than mine, take the same view of the subject."

As the fears which the Bishop expresses in the last letter, as to the continuance of agitation on the subject of the Tracts, were fully realized, it became due to his position in the Church, that at no very distant period he should give publicity to his views on the chief points of the controversy.

Towards the close of the year 1841, Dr. Hook wrote thus to him :—

"The aspect of Church affairs is very unpleasant. It seems to me that — and some others have become quite fanatical. But if we deal gently with fanatics on one side, we must deal as gently with fanatics on the other. The eyes of all men, I mean all right-minded men (among whom I modestly intend to include myself), are fixed upon your lordship, and I know that many, with myself, are prepared to follow as you shall lead."

To which the Bishop replied :—

"The late proceedings of some of the Oxford men have been strangely at variance with their professions of reverence for episcopacy. The real truth is, there is only *one* bishop to whom they are disposed to pay implicit submission. The rest they are ready to treat with respect so long as they breathe no suspicion of the tendency of their teaching, or of the soundness of their views of ecclesiastical discipline. But the moment that any of their own bishops point out that tendency, or act in opposition to those views, an outcry is raised



against them, and they are charged with schismatical irregularity, anti-catholic latitudinarianism, and even 'flat heresy.' Anything more schismatical than the proceedings of these writers themselves I can hardly conceive, short of an actual separation from the Church of which they are ministers.

I do not know that I shall find a suitable opportunity of making known my sentiments on the great questions which divide the Church, till my visitation next summer. What I shall then say (if it please God to spare my life so long), will probably please neither party—rather, I should say, *not any* party, except it may be a comparatively small one; for there is none of whose principles or opinions I entirely approve, not even of *yours*, although my views are, I believe, nearer to them than they are to those of any other party. I use the word *party* not in an invidious sense, but as signifying a portion or division of the Church.

I am still anxious to keep things quiet, as far as it may be possible. The secession of a few fanatical men from our Church to that of Rome will be no loss to us, while it may have the effect of inspiring caution into those who have unintentionally smoothed the way from one to the other, while they fancied that they were obviating the necessity of such secession, by paring down the differences between the two Churches.

A faithful preaching of the doctrines contained in our own Articles, and a complete and strict observance of our liturgical rules, this is what I desire to see brought about; but I object to any *addition* to either."

Meanwhile, he gave expression to his sentiments on one branch of the religious questions of the day, by the publication of three sermons "on the Church," originally delivered as Lent lectures at St. James's,

Westminster. These sermons are an attempt to set forth the Anglican view of the nature and attributes of the Church. While vindicating the *sacramental* character of the Church, and showing the Apostolical origin of Episcopacy, he maintained that those foreign Churches which had lost the succession of bishops were not to be condemned as lacking the essence, though they might not have what was necessary to the perfection of true members of the body of Christ; an opinion which he fortified by quoting the sentiments of Hooker, Bramhall, and Andrewes. Those who had separated from the Episcopal Church *at home*, he would not acquit of the guilt of schism, though he would not pronounce upon them the sentence of absolute exclusion from the Church of Christ.

Such a guarded and moderate, though decided, way of stating the views of the Church of England on this subject, was not likely to be much listened to, amid the din of controversy, by either of the contending parties. It was not till the publication of his Charge, in the autumn of 1842, when he felt himself called upon to enter into the details of disputed questions, and, as far as he could, to pronounce authoritatively upon them, that his name became the most conspicuous, and his words the best known, among all who had taken any part for or against the Tractarian movement.

Some time afterwards, when consulting with his archdeacons on the best means of allaying the excitement caused by this Charge, he said: "My object in writing it, was to give a general answer to the inquiries which were continually addressed to me by

numbers of the clergy, who being in doubt as to the Church's regulations for the performance of Divine worship, desired to act under the authority of their own Diocesan."

As the delivery of this Charge forms an epoch in the life of Bishop Blomfield, and marks one in the history of the Church of England, it has been thought well to reprint here the most important passages of it in a separate chapter.

## CHAPTER II.

BISHOP BLOMFIELD'S CHARGE OF 1842—NECESSITY OF SPEAKING ON  
DISPUTED POINTS—A ROMAN INTERPRETATION OF THE ARTICLES  
UNTENABLE—RITUAL DIRECTIONS—ADVANTAGE OF FREQUENT SER-  
VICES — THE EXTREME RITUAL PARTY — DUTY OF PROTESTING  
AGAINST THE CHURCH OF ROME—PROSPECTS OF THE CHURCH OF  
ENGLAND.

“REVEREND BRETHREN,—I have looked forward to meeting you, on the occasion of my fourth Visitation, with mingled feelings of pleasure and anxiety; of pleasure, as being permitted by the goodness of God to congratulate you upon the Church's increased and increasing energy, and usefulness, and power; of anxiety, as being sensible that I should be expected to speak, with the authority belonging to my office, upon the most important of the questions, respecting which the clergy are at this time divided in opinion. These questions are, in fact, so much more urgent than any others which present themselves as suitable topics of an address upon this occasion, that I make no apology for entering upon them at once, without pausing to notice matters of inferior moment.

The questions to which I allude relate partly to the doctrines of our Church, and partly to its ritual. It will not be possible for me, in the compass of a single Charge, to do more than touch in a summary manner upon the principal features of the controversy now carrying on amongst us; and I must therefore abstain, as far as the nature of the subjects will permit, from lengthened argument and discussion: but you have a

right to know my opinions on these matters; and I shall proceed to state them as plainly and as briefly as I can. This is the first opportunity which I have had of doing so, in an official address to the clergy, since the controversy assumed a definite and prominent shape; and I acknowledge that I was not unwilling to pause, and to be silent for a time, in the hope that those who have been engaged in that controversy would see the evils which must ensue to the Church from its continuance, and be led to modify, or, at least, to keep within their own bosoms, what I considered to be extreme opinions. That hope has unhappily passed away; and it now remains for me to perform the duty of pronouncing that deliberate judgment, which the clergy of my own diocese are entitled to look for. In so doing, it will be my endeavour, in humble reliance upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit, not to enter into a polemical discussion on the truth of the doctrines, or the propriety of the rites and ceremonies, which will come under consideration; but to act as an interpreter of the Church's sense as to the one, and of her will as to the other. If these can be clearly ascertained, we can have no difficulty, looking to the relation in which we stand to her, as to *what* we are to teach, or *how* we are to minister: for we have all solemnly promised, at our ordination, to 'give our faithful diligence, always so to minister the doctrine, and sacraments, and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church and realm hath received the same.'"

After stating the Church's view with regard to ministerial authority, and showing that ministerial duty is limited and defined by the laws of the Church and the Thirty-nine Articles, he proceeds:—

“The endeavour to give a Tridentine colouring to the Articles of Religion agreed upon by the Council of London in 1562, and to extenuate the essential differences between the two Churches, is a ground of no unreasonable alarm to those whose bounden duty it is ‘to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines,’ and therefore to guard against the insinuation into our Church of any of those false opinions which she has solemnly repudiated. It is one of the methods by which the Court of Rome has before sought to beguile the people of this country of their common sense. . . . What real good is to be effected by any attempts to make our Reformed Church appear to symbolize with that from which she has been separated, in some of the very points which formed the grounds of that separation, I am at a loss to imagine. Desirable as is the unity of the Catholic Church, lamentable as have been in some directions the consequences of its interruption, earnestly as we ought to labour and to pray for its restoration, we can never consent to reinstate it, by embracing any one of the errors which we have renounced.

Yet there is no other method than that of embracing *all* those errors, by which a reconciliation could be effected between our own Church and that of Rome, which, when it decreed its own infallibility, cut off the possibility of its abandoning a single erroneous opinion which it has once formally sanctioned. If, therefore, we are to seek for unity in a reconciliation with Rome, we must be prepared to traverse the entire space which lies between us and the Vatican; for not a hair's breadth will the rulers or doctors of that Church advance to meet us. Read the recently published letter of Dr. Wiseman on Catholic Unity, and you will see that he stands at the door, and holds it open for those amongst us who profess, as he says, to be conscious ‘that reunion with the Holy See will give vigour and energy to a

languid and sickly existence, and who must be prepared to go to the full extent of sacrifice of personal feelings, necessary to accomplish so sacred a purpose.' He beckons them in with gracious words of commendation, but not a step does he advance beyond the threshold to meet them; not an error does he promise to renounce; not even a glimmering hope does he hold out of any reformation. I believe that his expectations will be disappointed; that the number of those who are prepared to apostatize to an idolatrous Church, is very inconsiderable. But a greater evil than the apostasy of a few, or even of many, would be the success of any attempt to establish the fact, not indeed of a perfect identity, but of something more than a sisterly resemblance between the two Churches; and to prove that a member of the Anglican Church can consistently hold all the errors of the Roman, except one or two of the most flagrant, and even *them*, it may be, with certain qualifications."

After asserting that in *proving* the Articles, the single ultimate reference must be to Scripture, not to the Creeds, nor to tradition of any kind, he goes on:—

"I have already observed, that in the interpretation of the Articles which relate more immediately to doctrine, our safest guide is the Liturgy. It may safely be pronounced of any explanation of an Article which cannot be reconciled with the plain language of the offices for public worship, that it is not the doctrine of the Church. The opinion, for instance, which denies baptismal regeneration might possibly, though not without great difficulty, be reconciled with the language of the 27th Article; but by no stretch of ingenuity, or latitude of explanation, can it be brought to agree with the plain unqualified language of the offices for Baptism

and Confirmation. A question may properly be raised as to the sense in which the term regeneration was used in the early Church, and by our own reformers; but that regeneration does actually take place in baptism, is most undoubtedly the doctrine of the English Church; and I do not understand how any clergyman, who uses the Office for Baptism, which he has bound himself to use, and which he cannot alter nor mutilate without a breach of good faith, can deny that, in some sense or other, baptism is indeed *the laver of regeneration.*"

The 11th Article is then adduced as one of those of which the language is corrected by that of the Liturgy; it being less theologically correct to say that we are justified *by faith*, than to say, as in the Post-Communion Service, that we are justified "by the merits and death of Jesus Christ, and *through faith* in His blood." After which, the following passage occurs, on the doctrine "of religious reserve" taught in the Tracts for the Times:—

"Now, if justification, or its results, be, as undoubtedly they are, inseparably connected with faith in the atonement wrought by Jesus Christ, I do not understand how it can be expedient or lawful for us, who are to declare to our people *all the counsel of God*, to practise anything of that reserve which was practised by the early teachers of Christianity, and to forbear from pressing upon the less advanced of our hearers the most sublime and mysterious doctrines of the Gospel. But in truth the reserve of the early (not the primitive) Fathers of the Church, was different, if not as to its subjects, yet certainly as to its objects, from that which appears to be now recommended; and supposing it to have been prudent and commendable in *them*, it by no



means follows that it is expedient or proper in the present state of the Church.

If, indeed, the reserve which is recommended to us be nothing more than a cautious and reverent abstaining from a too familiar mode of treating the sacred and sublime mysteries of our religion, or from such an inculcation of them as may tend to throw into the shade its practical duties, and lead men so to contemplate the attributes or secret things of God, as to forget or undervalue His commands, I readily admit the necessity of *such* a reserve ; but anything of the nature of a *disciplina arcana* I as promptly reject.

I now proceed to offer some observations upon the duty of complying with the Church's directions in the celebration of Divine service. Our proper rules in this respect are the Rubric and Canons, as the Articles are with regard to doctrine ; and we are bound to observe the rule in the one case as in the other, although it must be acknowledged, that a departure from the truth is more injurious in its consequences than a deviation from the prescribed ritual. Now, it is impossible to deny that a great degree of laxity has crept over us in this matter ; and we are much indebted to those learned and pious men who have forcibly recalled our attention to a branch of duty too long imperfectly performed. In some instances, indeed, they have gone beyond the line of duty and of prudence, in recommending or practising ceremonies and forms not authorized by their own Church, and in ascribing to others an importance which does not properly belong to them ; but there can be no doubt of their having mainly contributed to the progress which has been made in the last few years towards a full and exact observance of the Church's rubrical injunctions, as well as to a better understanding of the foundations and proportions of her polity, and the nature and value of her discipline. We ought not

to overlook the real good which they have effected in one direction, while we contemplate with apprehension the evil which it is to be feared they have wrought in another.

Every clergyman is bound, by the plainest obligations of duty, to obey the directions of the Rubric. For conforming to them in every particular, he needs no other authority than that of the Rubric itself. We ought not to be deterred from a scrupulous observance of the rites and customs prescribed or sanctioned by our Church by a dread of being thought too careful about the externals of religion. If we are not to go *beyond* her ritual, at least we ought not to *fall short* of it, nor to make her public services less frequent nor more naked and inexpressive than she intends them to be. In saying this, I am not holding any new language [quoting words from his Charge at Chester. See vol. i. p. 110].

An honest endeavour to carry out the Church's intentions, in every part of public worship, ought not to be stigmatized as popish or superstitious. If it be singular, it is such a singularity as should be cured not by one person's desisting from it, but by all taking it up. When I have been asked whether I approved of certain changes in the mode of celebrating Divine service which were spoken of as novelties, but which were, in fact, nothing more than a return to the anciently-established order of the Church, my answer has been, 'Far from questioning the *right* of the clergy to observe the Rubric in every particular, I know it to be their *duty*; and the only doubt is, how far are *we* justified in not *enforcing* such observance in every instance?'

It may indeed call for the exercise of a sound discretion, in certain cases, as to the time and mode of bringing about an entire conformity of your practice in this respect with the letter of the law; but I cannot, as it appears to me, consistently with my duty, interpose any obstacles

nor offer any objection to its being done. I wish this observation to be understood as applicable not only to the administration of public baptism at the time prescribed by the Rubric, to the reading of the Offertory sentences, and to the prayer for the Church Militant, but to the observance of the days which the Church appoints to be kept holy. . . . The reason which is commonly assigned for the non-observance of some of these holy-days, namely, that the people will not go to church, even if we celebrate Divine service, I consider not to be of such weight as to preponderate against the plain requirements of the law. The people's neglect in this particular, which began in an age when the Church's discipline was sadly relaxed, was perhaps suffered to grow into a confirmed and almost universal habit by the too great easiness of the clergy in giving way to it—in not pressing upon their hearers the duty of frequently attending church, and giving them opportunities of doing so. It must needs take some time to overcome that habit; but the clergy must be the first to attempt it, and they are not to be blamed for making the attempt. Let them do *their* part in carrying out the Church's intentions, and then none of the laity will have cause to complain of being deprived, by their means, of any one of the opportunities and privileges to which all her children are entitled."

Passing on to speak of daily services, and mentioning that in his primary Charge he had expressed a wish to see them tried, the Bishop proceeds :

"In expressing that wish, I had in view the parish churches in towns; and where it has been carried into effect I believe that a considerable number of persons have been found to profit by the opportunities so afforded. I know of no reason why the same practice

should not be resorted to in country parishes, where the resident clergymen are desirous of giving full effect to the Church's intentions ; although the employments and habits of our rural population may prevent it, for a time at least, from producing much effect. The truth is, reverend brethren, that until the Church's intentions are completely fulfilled, as to her ritual, we do not know what the Church really is, nor what she is capable of effecting. It is the instrument by which she seeks to realize and apply her doctrines ; and the integrity and purity of the one may, as to their effect, be marred and hindered, in what degree we know not, by a defective observance of the other.

I would urge this consideration upon you with an especial reference to the more frequent celebration of the Holy Communion, the most appropriate and distinguishing act of Christian worship. I am persuaded that much of the backwardness and unwillingness to communicate, which the clergy have so much cause to lament in country parishes, has arisen from the practice of having only quarterly Communions. The people are brought to consider the Lord's Supper, not only as the most solemn office of devotion, but as something so mysterious and awful that the Church can venture to celebrate it only upon rare occasions ; and they are naturally led to question their own fitness to receive it. They are reminded of the duty only once in three months ; and while they are doubting, and perhaps all but resolved to communicate, the opportunity passes away, and they think no more of it for another quarter of a year. A more frequent celebration of those holy mysteries, with proper instruction on the part of the clergy, would keep the duty of communicating more constantly before the eyes of the people : the disobedience and neglect which they practise once a quarter, they will be less likely to practise every month, or every week ; and I believe that

in few instances have the clergy multiplied the opportunities of parochial communion without increasing the number of communicants."

After quoting the opinion of Bishop Butler on "the frequent and decorous celebration of divine worship," he goes on to speak of the canons as being, some of them, still binding upon the clergy, others virtually obsolete ; and of customs, such as making obeisance or worshipping towards the east, which were of primitive origin, but not directly enjoined by the Church of England. The ornaments of the Communion table are then touched upon :—

"I strongly disapprove of the practice which, as I am informed, has been adopted by a few of the clergy, of decorating the Communion-table with flowers ; and especially when that decoration is varied from day to day, so as to have some fanciful analogy to the history of the saint who is commemorated. This appears to me to be something worse than frivolous, and to approach very nearly to the honours paid by the Church of Rome to deified sinners. Such practices as these, which are neither prescribed nor recommended, nor even noticed by our Church, nor sanctioned by general custom, throw discredit upon those decent ceremonies and expressive forms which are intended to enliven the devotion of those who are engaged in the service of God, and to do honour to his holy name. In resisting an exaggerated spiritualism, we must be careful not to incur the charge of materializing religion ; and, above all, we must beware of arbitrarily connecting the gifts of God with ordinances of merely human appointment, and of teaching our people to place the ceremonies which the Church has ordained, however significant and laudable, on the same

footing as the Sacraments which have been ordained by the Lord Jesus Himself. It is very well to speak of them as precious fragments of an ancient, or perhaps a primitive ritual; but we deny that they are to be cherished as anything more than decent and venerable usages; or that we have the slightest evidence of their being divinely authorized portions of the Church's perpetual spiritual sacrifice.

You are not to take as your rule or model in this respect the early Church, nor the primitive Church; but the Church of England, as she speaks in plain and obvious cases by her Rubric and Canons—in doubtful and undecided ones, by her Bishops. This is the language of common sense, as it is also of the canon law, laid down by its able interpreter, Van Espen: '*Singularium Ecclesiarum ritus atque cæremonialia, sive ritualia, servanda sunt; neque presbyteris, aliisve ecclesiæ ministris, ritum præscriptum immutare licet, eo etiam prætextu, quod contrarius ritus pristinae ecclesiæ disciplinæ conformior esset, videreturque ad excitandam populi devotionem, necnon ad explicanda mysteria, aptior et convenientior.*' I earnestly wish that this rule were kept in view by all clergymen. We should not then have to complain of unwarrantable omissions and alterations of the Church's service on the one side, nor of unauthorized additions to her ritual on the other. I confess that I view the former fault with less complacency than the latter. I think that a clergyman who presumes to omit any part of the offices which he has solemnly pledged himself to use whole and entire, either through haste, or negligence, or, which is still worse, from a dislike of the doctrine which they assert, offends more grievously against the order of the Church than he who, from a mistaken zeal for antiquity, revives obsolete practices, or is minutely scrupulous in his attention to the

externals of religion. It is my earnest wish that you should omit no part of the solemn services which the Church has appointed to be used, whether in the administration of the sacraments, or in what are commonly termed the Occasional Offices."

The Bishop then gives his opinion that in preaching it is more correct to wear the surplice than the gown at the *morning* service; and proceeds to speak of the manner of reading the Liturgy of the Church:—

"It is much to be regretted, that any of the clergy of our Reformed Church, which justly glories in a form of public prayer, so framed that the people may both understand it and bear a part in it, should think it necessary, or profitable, or consistent with the Church's intentions, to read it in a hurried and indistinct manner.

It is a subject, my brethren, of still deeper concern, that any of our body, though but few, should evince a desire and longing to revert, not merely to some of the outward ceremonies, but to the devotional formularies of the Church of Rome; that they should speak disparagingly and disrespectfully of our Liturgy, and prepare men of ardent feelings and warm imaginations for a return to the Romish mass-book, by publishing for daily use devotions and homilies taken from authors of that Church, and embodying not a few of its superstitious and unscriptural doctrines and practices; that they should recommend, or justify, under any qualification, prayers or addresses to saints, which began in poetry and ended in idolatry; intercessions for the dead, which our Church, by her formal discontinuance of them, has implicitly forbidden, and which tend directly to the notion of purgatory; and auricular confession, a practice utterly unknown to the primitive

Church, one of the most fearful abuses of that of Rome, and the source of unspeakable abominations.

It is a subject of concern, that while they protest in cautious and measured terms against some of the errors of that Church, they should abstain from the plain, uncompromising assertion of her unscriptural, or rather her anti-scriptural character, and spend their lamentations on their own national Church, as sitting apart from the mother of Churches, and in bondage to the powers of this world, rather than upon that system of corruption and tyranny which drove her from communion with Rome, and which is still maintained by Rome in theory, and, as far as circumstances will permit, in practice also.

Again, it is matter of shame and grief to *us*, and of exultation to our adversaries, that while such men as Hildebrand and Becket are held up to admiration, men who, if they were sincere, were yet the authors and abettors of evils, the firebrands of discord, and the subverters of civil government, reproach and censure should be cast upon those holy fathers to whom, under God, we owe deliverance from an intolerable yoke, Cranmer, and Ridley, and Jewel; as though the occasional errors into which they may have fallen, under circumstances of difficulty which *we* are wholly unable to appreciate, were not a thousand times outweighed by their services to the cause of God's truth and of his Church.

Let us not scruple to say of the Church of Rome, not for *her* condemnation, but in our own vindication and defence, and for a warning to those who are in danger of being deceived by her delusive attractions, that she is in a state of schism, if not of apostasy; that she has forsaken the true faith, and defiled herself with superstition and idolatry. And let us speak all the more plainly, seeing that she again employs, as her



chosen defenders and emissaries, a society of men bound together by a vow to uphold by all methods, and at all hazards, not Christianity, but popery; and who, in accordance with that vow, have framed and carried out a system so hideous in its principles, so mischievous in its effects, that it well deserves to be described as having embodied the very 'mystery of iniquity.'

Against such a Church we are bound continually to lift up the voice of solemn remonstrance; and far from being ashamed of the name of Protestant, we ought to show that a sincere and immovable attachment to the Catholic Church, in its constitution, discipline, authority, privileges, and offices, is perfectly compatible with, or rather is itself a practical act of, protestation against the errors and corruptions of the Papal Church. And surely the duty of so protesting is not to be lost sight of, at a time when that Church is boldly re-asserting its pretensions amongst us, and affecting to look for the speedy return of our own Reformed Church into its maternal bosom. Its errors are not less opposed to Gospel truth and holiness now, than they were at the time of the Reformation. The doctrines and practices which rendered necessary our separation from that Church, are still unchanged by her, unchanged, unmitigated, unqualified; nor are the differences between us—in essential matters—less at the present moment, than they were in the days of Cranmer or of Jewel, of Taylor or of Bull. We are far from presuming to assert the absolute perfectness of our own Church; but it is not in retracing any of the steps, by which she has receded from the Church of Rome, that she is to be made perfect; nor by attempting to remodel her upon the doctrine and discipline, not of the primitive Church, but of the Church of the fourth or fifth century, infected as it was with the remains of Gnostic superstition, and the inventions of enthusiastic or ambitious men.

That we are in some respects impeded and trammelled by the nature of our legal connexion with the State, is true ; and this is itself one consequence which followed from the abuse of the papal power before the Reformation ; but this imperfection will in no way be remedied by the resumption of exploded principles or practices ; and I cannot help suspecting that the desire of reverting to *them*, with less of impediment than now exists, is one motive with some persons, who are seeking to effect a total separation of the Church from the State. Let us do all that we have at this moment the power of doing, as the ministers of that Church ; nay, let us but do all that we are bound to do, and we shall then see what further freedom of action is required. Before we cry out for a reformation of the Church's laws, let us try the effect of those which are in existence, and not complain of the insufficiency of her ordinances, till we have carried into them the spirit which is requisite to give them life and efficacy.

It will not, I think, be denied, that the Church of this country, in point of energy, power, and usefulness, is, by God's goodness, at this moment progressive : strange, that at this very time complaints should be uttered of her wearing the chains of an ignoble thralldom, of her being compelled to mutter in indistinct accents the praises of God, and of her not affording sufficient scope for the indulgence of devotional feelings—that Church in which the seraphic piety of Hooker, and Hall, and Taylor, and Herbert, and Ken, and Wilson, felt no deficiency nor restraint.

If instead of such lamentations, alarming our people, and unsettling the minds of our younger brethren in the ministry, we would admonish, comfort, and encourage one another to be faithful to our dear mother, and use, in the spirit of diligence and love, all the means and appliances of good which she places in our

hands, setting ourselves, as a united band of Christian soldiers, with composed and stedfast resolution, to resist the inroads of Popery on the one hand, and of irregular enthusiasm on the other; if we had but grace to realise, in our own lives and persons, the plain precepts and directions which she has given for our guidance, recommending them by our example to the consciences and affections of all men, we should discover that there is much less need of alteration than is supposed; and, at all events, we should know for a certainty in what direction that alteration should be attempted."

After a brief mention of the Colonial Bishopricks and Metropolis Churches Funds, and some minute directions on points of ritual, the Charge concludes with the following passage:—

"In conclusion, reverend brethren, let us be careful to bear in mind ourselves, and to teach our people, that the outward means and aids of religion are not religion itself, but are so far valuable and useful as they contribute to the great ends of religion, to form Christ within us, to establish the life of God in the soul, and to keep us within the precincts of His grace. The more careful we are to observe all the external circumstances of devotion, the more diligently let us cherish in ourselves, and strive to promote in others, those spiritual affections which they are intended to excite and strengthen. And while we *contend earnestly for the faith as delivered to the saints*, and for all the ordinances of God, let us not forget the *more excellent way*, but *put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness*, and pray earnestly, and strive as well as pray, that 'all hatred and prejudice may be taken away from us, and whatsoever doth hinder us from godly union and concord;

that as there is but one body, and one Spirit, and one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all; so we may henceforth be all of one heart and one spirit, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify God through Jesus Christ our Lord.'"

## CHAPTER III.

THE CHARGE WELL RECEIVED AT FIRST—OBJECTIONS OF THE EVANGELICALS—REACTION AGAINST THE CHARGE—DIFFICULT POSITION OF THE BISHOP — EXCITEMENT CAUSED BY RITUAL CHANGES—LETTER OF ARCHBISHOP HOWLEY—THE BISHOP GRADUALLY WITH-DRAWS HIS RECOMMENDATIONS—FINAL ASPECT OF THE RITUAL QUESTION IN 1847—DISSENTERS' CHAPELS BILL—ATTACKS OF THE PRESS—DEATH OF HIS MOTHER—OFFICE OF RURAL DEANS.

No great excitement followed immediately upon the delivery of this Charge. On the contrary, it seemed at first to be accepted by both parties in the Church as a judicious and temperate expression of opinion on points which required delicate handling. Many of the clergy, both in London and in the rural parts of the diocese, at once announced their intention of complying with the Bishop's directions as to the observance of the Rubric, by preaching in their surplices, and reading the prayer for the Church Militant. The *Record*, indeed, found fault with the doctrinal parts of the Charge, especially on the subject of baptismal regeneration, which doctrine it maintained that "the Church had repudiated, or implicitly forbidden," as an "evil and unscriptural figment, continually deluding men to their eternal ruin." These criticisms were circulated by the editor through the entire diocese, but without producing much effect, even among his own partisans. One clergyman returned the

pamphlet to the publisher, remarking that he considered such an attempt to undermine the authority of the Bishop mean and ungentleman-like, as well as insulting to the clergy—an answer which the editor characterized as “an example of the spirit of the world as contradistinguished from the spirit of the Church—a spirit superficial, ill-instructed, and unsound, as opposed to the wisdom and truth of the Gospel.” But while condemning the doctrines of its Diocesan, the *Record* found no great fault with his directions as to Rubrical observance; and even six months after the publication of the Charge, it was of opinion that they might be complied with, as a matter of Church order, without any serious injury to the cause of Evangelical religion. Meanwhile, the Bishop himself had been for some weeks obliged, by serious illness, almost to lay aside business. He was seized, early in January, 1843, with an attack of spasms in the cæcum, which kept him in a very weak condition for about two months, and the effects of which upon his constitution probably lasted much longer. Soon after his recovery from this attack he took occasion, while making a circuit of confirmations, to remonstrate privately with those few clergy who had expressed reluctance to comply with his directions, and had reason to believe that his remonstrances would be effectual. On the whole, up to May, 1843, his Charge, though attacked by the public press, had been as well received by his clergy as he probably expected.

The following letters will illustrate the Bishop's own opinion on this point, and the view taken of his Charge by men of opposite religious schools:—

[*Written during his Visitation.*]

“Oct. 20, 1842.

“My Charge appears to give pretty general satisfaction, but the *Times*, I see, is most disingenuous and unfair. [The *Times* had represented the Bishop as giving “his official judgment” in favour of the Oxford divines (who were now supported by this newspaper) “upon every fundamental point of doctrine, and upon the great majority of practical questions which have been lately brought into controversy;” and had said that the Bishop proceeded to enjoin the observance of the Rubric “with a degree of strictness which, if his Lordship be rightly represented, has, since the days of Laud never been attained or attempted;” adding that this strictness had always been a sign or accompaniment of the greatest strength, energy, and purity in the Church.]

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“Oct. 23, 1842.

“I have been amused at your anxiety about the remarks upon my Charge; but it has been exceedingly well received, both by clergy and laity, and I have no doubt will produce a very beneficial effect. All the battling about it in the newspapers proves the importance attached to it, and will set people a-thinking upon the matters to which it refers.”

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“Oct. 25, 1842.

“My Charge appears to give great satisfaction both to clergy and laity throughout the diocese. Mr. Frere writes me word, that it gives ‘universal satisfaction.’ The clergy of Chelmsford and the neighbourhood have already acted upon it, and so, I find, have some of the London clergy. The great objectors to the practical

part will be the rectors of the great west-end parishes ; but they will all be forced to conform by degrees. The *Record* and the *Times* are about equally dishonest on opposite sides. The former carefully keeps out of sight my real object, which is not to inquire whether the Church's doctrine be true, or her ritual proper ; but *what* that doctrine and ritual *really* are. I have been most kindly and cordially received by the clergy everywhere."

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*From the Rev. J. W. Cunningham.*

"HARROW, Nov. 23, 1842.

"....I trust your Lordship will allow me to express the deep regret which I feel at the unjust and ungenerous treatment which the Charge appears to me to have received in many of the comments of the *Record* newspaper. You would do the greatest injustice to very large numbers who agree with the *Record* in certain leading sentiments, if you should suspect them of not cordially condemning both many of the sentiments of the editor, and the spirit in which they are expressed. The editor, be he who he may, is a man not to be wrought upon by entreaty or remonstrance ; and though many take in the paper, as a matter of convenience, almost every reader of my acquaintance is loud in his complaints, both of the temper and the logic of its leading articles.

In the next place, I am most anxious, for myself and for many others, to express the deepest gratitude, first, 'to Him to whom the honour is due, as to the Great Searcher and Counsellor,' and next, to your Lordship, for a large part of this most important document ; feeling, as I do, that every honest Tractarian must regard the charge as a death-blow to his own leading



opinions. May it be so regarded, and, what I cannot hesitate to consider as a heresy of the worst order, be crushed before that fuller development takes place, which, as I believe, is pregnant with so much mischief to the Church and to the country. As to many of the controverted points, what appeared to be chiefly needed, was a clear, strong, calm, logical decision from one whose judgment every clergyman, especially, is bound to respect; and this has been supplied by the present Charge. It is a matter of astonishment to me, that any lover of truth should feel it practicable to forget or overlook the great bulk of most important matter, and to fix his eyes exclusively on the comparatively small part with which he cannot agree. Such is not my own view of the case; and I am most thankful for the opportunity of laying the tribute of my gratitude at your feet, and of expressing my hope that, under a kind Providence, your Lordship may be instrumental in rendering the most valuable service to the cause of Scriptural and Reformation religion. ...."

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*From the Rev. Dr. Hook.*

"VICARAGE, LEEDS, Dec. 15, 1842.

"I thank you most sincerely for your kindness in sending me your words of wisdom; for as such I may describe your Lordship's Charge. It was anxiously looked for; it has been gratefully accepted by all except the very extremes of opposing parties. Under the Divine blessing, I think the good it is likely to do is incalculable. The spiritually minded who come to church to *worship* rather than to *hear*, and who delight to approach God with outward as well as internal reverence, are grateful to your Lordship for the sanction you have given to the observance of the forms of our Church. Of course forms,

except viewed in this light, are like a body without a soul, and the observance of them often becomes ridiculous; it is not therefore desirable that they should be observed *merely* because your Lordship sanctions them, and I cannot help thinking that the clergy will be more and more convinced of the wisdom of your Lordship in rather tolerating than enjoining their observance."

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The next are from the Bishop to two clergymen in the diocese:—

"FULHAM, Nov. 10, 1842.

"If the excitable persons to whom you allude will take the trouble of reading my Charge, they will see the absurdity of supposing that the changes which I have recommended in the mode of performing Divine service are concessions to the Romanizing party. They are simply acts of obedience to our own Church, in fulfilment of our solemn promise to her. The effect of one clergyman in a town adhering to the old irregular practice would be to throw the very suspicion which you wish to avoid upon his brethren who are more careful in fulfilling their duty. I do not recommend you to adopt any custom which is not enjoined by the Rubric and Canons; but in adhering to *them*, and to the recommendations of your Diocesan, you have an answer to all objections that are worth answering. You should bring your people up to the Church's standard rather than lower that standard to humour them. Judicious explanation and instruction will very soon remove all objections. . . ."

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"FULHAM, Nov. 14, 1842.

"I have not directly enjoined the use of the Prayer for the Church Militant, but I intended to intimate my  
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expectation that it would be adopted by the clergy. It is very clearly prescribed by the Rubric ; it does not add more than five minutes to the length of the service, which may be compensated, if necessary, by abridging the musical part of it.

The collection of alms is a difficult question, which I intended to leave to the discretion of the clergy. It seems to me that the Rubric contemplates its being done every Sunday ; and I shall be glad to see the practice, which has of late been partially reverted to, become general ; but there are difficulties in the way, especially in churches with galleries ; and people are so sensitive in the matter of *giving*, or being called upon to give, that I can hardly venture to say more than this, that if any clergyman thinks it expedient to adopt the practice, I approve of his doing so ; and that in every case I think it should be resorted to when there is a charity sermon. My own experience has satisfied me that this may be done without difficulty, and with great advantage."

It was due, in the first instance, to the Evangelical clergy of Islington, aided by the *Record* newspaper, that the suggestions of the Bishop on points of Rubric became the source of dissension and confusion throughout the diocese. The objections of the Islington clergy to the directions of their Diocesan were strengthened by the publication, in May, 1843, of the Charge of Archdeacon Hale, which was represented, though untruly, to have recommended the immediate introduction of a weekly offertory, the proceeds of which were to be *at the disposal of the Bishop*. Taking advantage of this misrepresentation, on the occasion of the Bishop's visiting Islington for a confirmation, the seventeen clergy of the parish met him in a body, and declared that to read the prayer

for the Church Militant, or to make collections through the offertory, would so disgust the majority of their congregations that it would be impossible to carry out the Bishop's injunctions. Overcome by this resistance, the Bishop accorded to Islington a latitude which he had not yet conceded to other parishes, and the clergy were soon enabled to announce to their congregations that no change would be made in the manner of conducting Divine service; while their alarm was further allayed by a circular letter which the Bishop issued soon afterwards, assuring them that he had no intention even of recommending the *immediate* adoption of a weekly offertory.

This concession on the part of Bishop Blomfield was the beginning of endless troubles. All the clergy accused of "Tractarian" leanings, and many others who did not labour under this imputation, had already complied with his directions; the minority who had held back were now encouraged to demand a toleration of their Nonconformity. The immunity granted to Islington was asked and obtained by Whitechapel, by Clerkenwell, and other parishes; and where the clergy did not desire such an immunity, a handle was given to the dissentient members of their congregations for holding indignation meetings, drawing up memorials and protests, and overwhelming the Bishop with all the weapons of ecclesiastical agitation. The tide of popular opinion began to set strongly against a return to rubrical practices. The *Quarterly Review* appeared two months before its usual time of publication, with an article on the "Rubrics and Ritual of the Church of England," condemning any such alterations of practice as those

recommended by the Bishop. The *Record* urged the laity to exert themselves in the cause of Protestantism ; and this appeal was not altogether ineffectual, for when it was proposed by some lay-members of the Church to present an address to Bishop Blomfield, thanking him for his Charge, it soon became known that this would be followed by a counter-address from the Evangelical party, headed by a well-known nobleman. To the proposition first mentioned, the Bishop alludes in writing to Mr. William Cotton :—

“ June 6, 1843.

“ I agree with you in opinion that it is better not to have any address made to me, either by clergy or laity, on the subject of my Charge. An address *for* will provoke an address *against* ; and I am persuaded that if I, and those who think with me, keep quiet, people will soon come to their senses, and wonder at their own folly.”

And to the same effect to Bishop Skinner, of Aberdeen :—

“ Sept. 20, 1843.

“ I thank you for the expression of your sympathy with me under the obloquy which has been heaped upon me for a plain, but not, I hope, uncharitable assertion of the doctrine and discipline of our Church. The dishonest arts to which the most vehement of my opponents have had recourse are an argument for the goodness of my cause. Truth will, in due time, assert its supremacy, and many persons will be surprised at their own folly, and ashamed of their violence.”

These expectations were not realized. The Bishop found himself in a very false position ; for while, on the

one hand, not having directly ordered the observance of the disused Rubrics, and having left the time of their introduction to the discretion of the clergy, he could feel himself justified in making such a concession to scruples as he had made in the case of Islington ; on the other hand, he could hardly, with any consistency, refuse to uphold those clergy who considered the lawful directions of their Diocesan of greater weight than the prejudices of their congregations. All that he could do in such cases was to say, in private letters, that he would rather see his own wishes set aside, though in themselves both reasonable and in accordance with the intentions of the Prayer-book, than the peace of the Church disturbed. But even this was too much ; and he was accused, not unnaturally, of deserting those who obeyed him best, while he connived at, or even applauded, the contumacy of those who set his authority at naught. The fact was that he had little anticipated the storm of fanaticism which his Charge was destined to evoke. In common with every reasonable man, he could separate in his own mind the vagaries of the extreme Oxford school from the good which its more moderate members had done to the Church, in reviving her ritual, and re-invigorating her worship ; and he forgot to consider that in the minds of a large section of the Church the two things would be inseparably blended, and that if he spoke well of the good he would certainly be represented as abetting the evil, however strongly he might, in fact, condemn it. He calculated on the existence of a far larger amount of genuine attachment to the Church, and a far smaller amount of sour and rigid Puritanism, than the event showed. Nor

did he, perhaps, foresee that under the shelter of his authority a small number of the clergy would introduce into the services of the Church observances which he disliked and disapproved, as well as those which he recommended; and that the former, being used almost exclusively by persons who had since joined, or were now joining the Church of Rome, would tend to bring the latter into discredit.

Thus, between those who refused to act up to, and those who persisted in going beyond his injunctions—between his unwillingness to retract words advisedly and deliberately spoken in his official character, and his readiness to sacrifice everything which did not involve a principle, in order to secure the peace of the Church, Bishop Blomfield was perplexed and harassed beyond anything which he had yet experienced. The storms which in some parishes had been excited by the introduction of the disputed changes, continued to rage with unabated violence, and bishop and clergy were exposed to the vulgar insolence of self-constituted ecclesiastical demagogues and the official zeal of churchwardens. With respect to one of the grossest of these cases of parochial agitation, and to the principles of his own Charge, the Bishop wrote thus to the Rev. E. Bickersteth:—

“FULHAM, Nov. 27, 1843.

“I thank you for your observations about the unhappy state of things at ——. You, no doubt, know enough of the state of things there to be aware that it existed long before my Charge was delivered, and that it was owing in part to a want of conciliation and courtesy on the part not so much of the vicar as of his curate. I am

persuaded that kind and judicious conduct would have prevented the disgraceful outbreak of bad feeling which has taken place there. I need hardly ask you to bear in mind that this is said in confidence.

With respect to the slight changes which I have recommended in the celebration of Divine service, as being in conformity with the Rubric, I may observe, first, that if the clergy of my diocese had adopted them generally, which I thought I had reason to hope would be the case, there would have been little, if any, dissatisfaction. At all events, it would not have been of long continuance when the practice in all the churches was uniform.

Secondly, I would observe that some of the clergy have not contented themselves with adopting the changes which I *did* recommend, but have introduced others which I did *not*, and so have brought suspicion upon the former.

I am still persuaded that the general principles which I laid down in my Charge are sound, and that in due time they will be admitted to be so. That I am not the only person who thinks so, you will perceive if you will take the trouble to read the accompanying extracts from two letters addressed to me by our friend the Bishop of Calcutta—the first, written before he had seen the attacks made upon me by the *Record* and other publications; the second, after he had read them.

With respect to —, the conduct of the agitators has been so violent, and so utterly inconsistent, I will not say with anything like Church principle, but with Christian feeling and propriety, that I could not possibly advise the clergy to give way. In one or two other cases which have occurred in the diocese, I have adjusted matters without much difficulty.

I cannot refrain from saying, that if the clergy of Islington had acted in the spirit which breathes in the



letter of their former excellent vicar, there would have been little disturbance about conformity to the Rubric in any part of the diocese."

The Rubrical storm extended even to our congregations abroad. The chaplain of the English congregation at Madeira, having introduced into the service the changes recommended by the Bishop of London, became so unpopular with some of the residents as to be the unoffending cause of an angry controversy, which lasted some years. Bishop Blomfield endeavoured to mediate between the contending parties; but the chief result of his endeavours was a disagreement with Lord Palmerston, then (1847) Foreign Secretary, who eventually set at naught the Bishop's customary jurisdiction over English congregations abroad, by appointing a chaplain for Madeira without episcopal licence.

In this unsatisfactory condition matters had continued till the close of the year 1844. At the beginning of 1845, Archbishop Howley, who had hitherto stood aloof from the Rubrical controversy, determined to make an effort to allay the storms which disturbed the Church. With this object, he addressed to the clergy and laity of his province a letter upon "the divisions in the Church, occasioned by differences of opinion with respect to the intention of certain Rubrical directions in the Liturgy, and diversities of practice in the performance of Divine service." The sum of the advice given in this letter was, that the disputants on both sides should suspend hostilities until some authoritative decision could be given on the points in controversy, and that matters should remain in every case *in statu quo*, uniformity of

practice not being required. The Archbishop fully upheld the principles laid down in Bishop Blomfield's Charge. "Universal concurrence," he said, "in the easy and obvious regulation of general conformity to the Rubric, would have combined the several advantages of securing compliance with the law of the Church and the land, of putting a stop to unauthorized innovations, and of excluding party distinctions, in their character decidedly unchristian, from the public worship of God ; and I cannot but regret that measures which, with a view to these good purposes, have been recommended by high authorities, should not have been received with unanimous acquiescence, as the means of restoring order and peace, without any departure from the principles of the Church or offence to the most scrupulous conscience." On the other hand, the Archbishop considered that the objectors had much to say for themselves : long-established custom, the disadvantages of change, the uncertain meaning of some of the Church's directions, might be pleaded in their favour ; it might be well to consider their scruples, even when unreasonable ; and if both parties would only make the sacrifice implied, in suspending all proceedings for the present, and letting things remain as they were, the Primate held out a hope, not only that the peace of the Church would be promoted for the present, but that at some future "convenient season" the questions in dispute might be finally settled.

This letter of Archbishop Howley removed, to a considerable extent, the difficulties of Bishop Blomfield's position. His ecclesiastical superior having now assumed the responsibility of speaking, in a semi-official

manner, on the question of Rubrical observance, he felt himself still more at liberty than he had done before to carry out the disagreeable, but necessary, duty of sacrificing his own wishes, and even his character for consistency, to the interests of peace. He wrote at this time very many letters to the clergy of the diocese, recommending them to follow the advice given in the Archbishop's letter, and allowing them the option of relinquishing or continuing, at their own discretion, the practices which he had recommended; "the Rubrical storm," as he said, "having been fanned into fury by the bellows" of one of his brother bishops.

On the whole, the effect of Archbishop Howley's letter upon the Church was that which it aimed at producing; not a final pacification, but a temporary truce, between contending parties. Bishop Blomfield having been the unwilling occasion of the storm, was, of course, the last to receive the benefits of the calm; and his correspondence for some time gives evidence of the difficulty which he found in adjusting the questions submitted to him, as the following extracts from letters to clergymen will show.

"Oct. 24, 1844.

"I have read the letter in which you are requested to perform the Church service at —, 'as it was when you were appointed to your present office;' by which, I suppose, it is meant that you should desist from that stricter compliance with the Rubric which you have adopted in consequence of my recommendations, and revert to that which I consider to be a less regular and orderly practice.

I am sorry that this wish should have been intimated to you at the expiration of two years from the time of your adopting my suggestions. It is evident that the laying aside the more Rubrical practice now, after two years' use of it, is a very different thing from the not having adopted it in the first instance. I might have acquiesced in the latter course, although I cannot consent to the former. . . ."

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"Nov. 11, 1844.

"From the conversation I had on Friday last with the deputation from —, it appeared that a considerable number of the congregation of — Chapel entertain a very strong objection to your introducing, at the present time, into the performance of the Church service, those changes which I have recommended as being required by the Rubric, which the clergy have promised, and the laity are in duty bound, to observe. My opinion as to the propriety of these changes, and of the obligation incumbent upon the clergy to observe the Rubric, as far as it is practicable, remains unchanged; and I am convinced that uniformity of practice in this respect amongst the clergy would have the effect of removing all objections to it on the part of the laity. But still, I have left it to the discretion of the clergy to choose the most fitting time for adopting them; and I would do so in the present instance. A wish having been expressed by some gentlemen of the deputation, that the changes in question should be deferred for a year, I have no objection to your acceding to that wish; and I trust that, during that interval of time, the objections now felt by some of your congregation to your compliance with the plain requirements of the Church, may be

removed or diminished by kind and judicious explanation on your part, and by calm and dispassionate consideration on theirs. . . .”

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“*Aug. 18, 1845.*

“... An attempt has been made to restore something like a general uniformity in the mode of conducting Divine service, and it has failed, owing to the peculiar state of feeling produced in the great body of the people by circumstances connected with the doctrines of the Church. The minds of the people not being prepared to understand or acquiesce in the changes proposed, however reasonable, it becomes very doubtful whether it be prudent or right to force them upon a particular congregation, while they are not insisted upon in the great majority of cases; and whether it be not better for the interests of the Church, while insisting upon the principle, to forbear, under protest as it were, from enforcing it.”

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“*Nov. 25, 1845.*

“... Fully admitting that you have the law on your side, and that an unjust outcry has been raised against you, and many other clergymen, for their adherence to the letter of that law, I cannot yet help doubting whether, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, you might not conscientiously discontinue the use of the prayer for the Church Militant, with the offertory, on those days when there is no Communion. This, I presume, is the point which is now at issue between you and your parishioners. I cannot, however, *call upon you* to do this; nor do I know what course has been pursued by the clergy who are your neighbours, a question which is of some importance as to your decision.”

*"Feb. 10, 1846.*

"... It cannot be denied that you, as well as others of the clergy, have some grounds of dissatisfaction in the course which I have found myself obliged to pursue with respect to the disputes occasioned by their strict adherence to the letter of the Rubric; but it is not so much against me, as against those who have reduced me to the necessity of following that course, that their complaints may most properly be made.

In my Charge of 1842, I urged upon the clergy the duty of a closer observance of the Rubric, believing (as I still believe) that if uniformity had been attained in that respect, it would have deprived our adversaries of an argument of some force, and would have contributed, in no small degree, to unity amongst ourselves.

But I was not supported, as I expected to be, by the clergy of London. In the county of Essex there was a general acquiescence in my wishes, and my suggestions were almost everywhere followed out, without opposition or objection on the part of the people. But in London and its immediate vicinity, while some of the clergy declined complying with my wishes, the greater number, after a short observance of them, returned to their former mode of celebrating Divine worship, without making known to me their intention; and the result was, as might be expected, that in the few parishes where the more correct practice was persevered in, a clamour was raised, which it was found impossible to still by argument, and the peace of the Church was threatened with a very serious interruption. Knowing that if I were to attempt maintaining the position which I had taken, by enforcing a compliance with my suggestions, serious consequences might ensue, I deemed it right, after consultation with those whose opinions I was bound to respect, to inform the clergy, as opportunity offered, that I did not require them

to observe that degree of Rubrical strictness which I had before required of them. . . . At the same time, it is quite evident that I could not *direct* any clergyman not to do that which the letter of the law enjoined upon him. The utmost length to which I could go was to abstain from enforcing the observance of it; and, in private and confidential communications, to intimate to him, as I did to you, my doubt as to the wisdom of his persevering in such observance.

With very few exceptions, this intimation has been acted upon by the clergy, and the peace of the diocese has been pretty generally restored.

In my communications with your parishioners I have never given them to understand that I would urge you to discontinue your present practice; and I think it far from improbable that you might have brought them to acquiesce in it, had you acted towards them with gentleness and forbearance, instead of using harsh language and a repulsive demeanour. You have, I fear, dwelt too strongly upon the *authority* of the priestly office, to persons not fully prepared by previous habits of thought and study to appreciate it.

The state of things which now exists in your parish would have been general throughout the metropolis, at least, if not in the diocese at large, had I persisted in my recommendations, or had I not made it generally known that I did not require the clergy to comply with them.

I do not mean to condemn the course which you have taken, as far as *principle* is concerned; I only intend to say, that *I* felt it my duty to take another course, and to suggest to the clergy the advisableness of doing the same."

The letter last quoted gives so full a review of the whole controversy, that it will not be necessary to quote

the very similar language in which, in his Charge of 1846, the Bishop details his reasons for not enforcing the ritual changes which he recommended, while at the same time he declares his continued adherence to the principles which he had laid down in recommending them. He adds, however, that with respect to matters of outward observance, he might perhaps not have felt himself bound to press his opinions upon the clergy, notwithstanding the plainness of the rules binding them, had he been fully aware of the amount of prejudice and misinformation on such questions, which prevailed in the Church.

Here, then, Bishop Blomfield's acts and opinions on Rubrical observance may be left for the present, as the controversy occasioned by them now died away, until it was revived a few years later by a combination of novel circumstances. But it may be well to observe, that though the Charge of 1842 did not produce, at the time, the effects which its author intended, it did not pass away without leaving its mark upon the Church. Its principles, though the subject of so much angry controversy at the time, are now recognised to a much greater extent than they were before. In the twenty years which have elapsed since then, the most important of the practices recommended by Bishop Blomfield have been steadily gaining ground in our churches. The use of the surplice in the pulpit, on which, from the first, he spoke hesitatingly, has been generally abandoned: but Communion has greatly increased in frequency; holy-days are more generally observed; and the use of the offertory, as the means of collecting alms and contributions, has been introduced into most churches when



occasional collections are made, and into some as a weekly custom, and that with the best possible effects. And, to speak more generally, it will hardly be denied that the great principle for which Bishop Blomfield contended, that in Divine service all things should be done not only *decently*, but *in order*, is now acted upon in the Church of England to an extent which, twenty years ago, would hardly have been expected by men of calm judgment, and which, thirty years ago, would by most have been pronounced impossible.

The Bishop himself, ever ready to extract good from evil, could see, even in the fanatical and angry spirit evoked by his Charge, a proof, which to him was a source of great satisfaction, that the spirit of the nation was still as decidedly Protestant, and as far from any desire to give up the principles of the Reformation, as it had ever been.

Some few events of interest in the life of Bishop Blomfield from 1843 to 1846 are now to be noticed.

In 1844, on the introduction in the House of Lords, by Lord Lyndhurst, of the "Dissenters' Chapels Bill," the object of which was to confirm the endowment of chapels to the particular denomination which had possessed the building for the previous twenty years, Bishop Blomfield gave his decided opposition to the measure, and spoke against it on two occasions. He denounced the principle of the bill as unjust, and its introduction as uncalled for; he quoted against Lord Lyndhurst his own decision in the celebrated case of "Lady Hewley's Charity;" and he declared that the effect of the measure would be "to enrich and endow Unitarianism with the

spoils of the more orthodox Dissenters." The "more orthodox Dissenters" felt the value of his advocacy, and expressed their gratitude for it. On the second occasion of his speaking on the subject, July 15, a listener, apparently a Dissenting minister, was overheard signifying at intervals his approbation of the speech, especially of the peroration, in which the Bishop, with some signs of emotion, expressed the regret which he felt at being obliged to act in opposition to the Government. Mr. Edward Bickersteth wrote to him on this occasion:—

"I cannot be content with a silent admiration of your most valuable stand against that fearful measure, the Dissenters' Chapels Bill. I deeply feel, with a large body of the clergy, that our Church and our whole country owe to your Lordship a great debt of gratitude for the clear, unequivocal, and most Christian addresses which you have made in the House of Lords against it. It has, I am sure, largely gained for your Lordship the cordial affection of the most devout servants of Christ of all denominations through our land; and many prayers for you, as well as many thanksgivings to God, will be poured out in your behalf. Our beloved Church also will be redeemed from the charge of indifference to our Heavenly Master's Divine glory, which ought to be dearer to all than life itself. . . ."

He received also a letter from a Dissenting minister at Brighton, who said that what the Bishop had done proved to him, and to many others, that the Bishops ought to retain their seats in Parliament. His aid, however, in the case of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill was unavailing, as it was carried by 100 to 27.

In November, 1844, Bishop Blomfield became the object of some newspaper attacks of more than ordinary

virulence. These began with a paragraph, copied from the *Globe* into the *Times*, stating that Sir Robert Peel and the Bishop of London were at variance about the living of St. George's, Hanover Square, then vacant by the death of Dr. Hodgson, Dean of Carlisle; the Premier wishing to have it divided into several livings, while the Bishop insisted on keeping it entire, in order to present to it his son-in-law. This was not only not true, but was not far from being the exact contrary to the truth. Bishop Blomfield had laid it down as a rule for himself, from which he never departed, that he would never present any near relation of his own to any important London living, even though well qualified for the post. On presenting his son to the living of St. Andrew Undershaft, which, though not a prominent position, was a valuable benefice, he first imposed upon the living a tax of £500 a year, for the benefit of poorly endowed districts. In the case of St. George's, Hanover Square, he particularly desired to do that which the newspaper reported him as objecting to when proposed by another. Sir Robert Peel, on his part, was ready to forward the Bishop's views. When the Bishop wrote to him, contradicting the report of his intentions, and asking the aid of the Government in the scheme of dividing the overgrown parish into six or seven smaller ones, Sir Robert replied :—

“I believe I saw the report about the living of St. George's, to which you refer; but it did not diminish my confidence that you would be disposed to avail yourself of the opportunity of making those arrangements with respect to the future constitution of this preferment

which should be most conducive to the spiritual welfare of those whom it concerns.

I think it highly probable that I shall concur in any scheme which may meet with your approbation, and shall be enabled to support it in Parliament."

Scarcely had this report been authoritatively contradicted in the newspapers which had given circulation to it, when the *Times* admitted into its columns, in the shape of a letter addressed to the Bishop of London, one of the most bitter attacks upon him that had yet appeared in the press. Taking for his text, "The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts," the writer accused the Bishop of everything that is most base—duplicity, avarice, cowardice, hypocrisy; and represented him as giving the prizes to the "slow and safe" party, while he assigned the posts of unrewarded labour to zeal, and learning, and piety; and as professing, to gain credit in the future, an earnest desire to promote the efficiency of the Church, while in practice he trimmed the boat between contending parties, and deserted any one who was weak enough to carry out in fact what he himself recommended in words. One who was much with the Bishop at this time has thus described the manner in which he received these attacks:—"When he read the letter in the *Times* it very little ruffled him, and in a few minutes he turned again to his ordinary employments. For the whole of the next week, and for a day or two in the following week, every number of the *Times* contained bitter invectives against him. The most scurrilous letters were admitted, and in some cases leading articles written upon them. . . .

During all this time he pursued his ordinary habits, doing his business with his wonted alacrity, and enjoying his family as usual. The attacks did not at all affect even his spirits." They had, moreover, the effect of calling out from some who did not think with the Bishop on many points, strong expressions of confidence in himself, and of indignation against his revilers.

It was fortunate that Bishop Blomfield was not thinned with regard to the attacks of the press, or of anonymous correspondents of his own, for both at this time, and during many years of his life, he enjoyed the distinction of being the best-abused Bishop on the English Bench. The temptation of being well spoken of by all men was one from which, at least during the latter half of his life, he had little to fear. But he was saved from suffering too much from the opposite misfortune, partly by his consciousness of the injustice of most of the attacks made upon him, partly by the engrossing nature of his occupations, which left him little leisure to think of those attacks, and partly by the humility of a genuinely Christian spirit, which would not disdain to learn something even from the accusations of malice or ignorance. He wrote to the Bishop of Gibraltar, in 1845, "One's life might be spent in contradicting false assertions and repelling unjust and uncharitable imputations, if it were not that one has something better to do ;" and to Mr. Tyler, the vicar of St. Giles's, at the time of the newspaper attacks above mentioned, "I thank you very cordially for the kind manner in which you have spoken of the late virulent attacks made upon me in the *Times*. If I have not deserved them they will not ultimately do me

any harm ; nor, indeed, as far as I *have* deserved them, if I know how to make a proper use of such trials of my patience." Once, when asked how he felt towards those who thus reviled him, he said, "Do you think I do not pray for them?" and this from one who, as a rule, concealed rather than betrayed his deeper religious feelings, had a force which those who knew him intimately could well appreciate.

The same month of November, 1844, was marked in the Bishop's life by a sudden and severe domestic affliction. The church of St. Mary, at Bury St. Edmund's—the place of his birth, and where his mother still lived—had been for some time in process of restoration ; and at the re-opening, which was fixed for the 29th of November, Bishop Blomfield had been asked, and had consented, to preach the sermon. For this purpose, he set out for Bury, with his wife and two daughters, on the 26th ; and, to use the words of his diary—

"Arrived at five o'clock, and, to my inexpressible grief, found that my dear mother had expired only ten minutes before, after two hours' illness, from an affection of the heart, in the eightieth year of her age. God forgive me all my faults towards her, and prepare me to follow her!"

The suddenness of this shock, and the peculiar circumstances under which it happened, increased the Bishop's natural sorrow at the loss of one who had been an attached mother to him, and to whom he had been an affectionate and dutiful son ; and there are signs of unusual emotion in the words in which he records her funeral :—

"Dec. 3.—Followed the remains of my dearest mother to the grave. .... In the same vault were interred, my dear father; my sisters, Louisa and Anne; and my son, Edward Thomas, who died in 1822, aged five. My sister Elizabeth will leave Bury, and then the last link which connects me with the place of my birth and education will be broken! *Deus misereatur!*"

Writing to his wife immediately after the event, he says:—

"The loss of one dear friend makes us value those who are left more highly, and cling to them more closely. It is a great consolation to me to reflect upon your great and unvarying kindness to my dearest mother; to whom, from the first day of your connexion with her, you were, in all respects, as a daughter, and who loved you in return as a mother. ...."

About the same time, Bishop Blomfield took some pains to revive in his diocese the institution of Ruridecanal Chapters, which had long fallen into abeyance, but had lately been restored with good effect in one or two other dioceses. In doing this, he was only carrying out the view which he had expressed, more than twenty years before, when Archdeacon of Colchester, "that it would be most beneficial to the Church .... if a regular local superintendence might be exercised over the parochial clergy by Rural Deans; the appointment of which officers, as well as the holding of diocesan synods, which had long been disused in some dioceses, was discontinued in others after the great Rebellion, to the no small detriment of the Church."<sup>1</sup> He thought that meetings of the clergy under the Rural Deans

<sup>1</sup> Note to Archidiaconal Charge, p. 19.

would be more useful, as well as more consistent with ecclesiastical order, than those of "Clerical Societies," which are apt to have a party character; and he trusted "that, as iron sharpeneth iron, so the conversation on parochial duties, which will take place at the Ruridecanal Chapters, will have the effect of awakening to increased exertion those of the parochial clergy who seem to be hardly aware of the solemn and fearful responsibility of their charge."

These meetings were accordingly revived in the diocese, and have produced good effects, by making the clergy more known to each other, and promoting unity and friendly feeling.



## CHAPTER IV.

THE ROMANIZING PARTY — BISHOP BLOMFIELD ON SECESSIONS TO ROME—CHARGE OF 1846—PAPAL INFALLIBILITY—ESSEX REMOVED FROM THE DIOCESE — PROPOSED NEW SEES—CORRESPONDENCE—AURICULAR CONFESSION—ERASTIANISM—CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA—RELIGIOUS FRATERNITIES—THE BISHOP AND SIR ROBERT INGLIS.

THE dissensions which now agitated the Church, as they drifted away for a time from questions of ritual, became more and more mixed up with those of doctrine; owing, in great measure, to the secession to Rome of some of the most prominent Oxford theologians, including their leader. Bishop Blomfield—while he opposed what he considered the unconstitutional patronage given by the State to the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, in the permanent endowment of the Maynooth College, which was carried by the Peel Ministry, in 1845—had to deal, at the same time, with the more dangerous support to the Roman Catholic cause in England, given by the deserters from our own Church. The condemnation of Mr. Ward, by the University of Oxford, for his work on “The Ideal of a Church,” was closely followed by some proceedings, which created no small stir at the time, on the part of his friend and fellow-collegian, Mr. Oakeley, then incumbent of the chapel in Margaret Street. He claimed the right to *hold*, as distinct from *teaching*, all the peculiar doctrines of the Church of

Rome, while remaining a clergyman of the Church of England. Bishop Blomfield felt it his duty not to pass over this extraordinary claim. He might have summarily revoked the licence of Mr. Oakeley; but he thought it better, with the advice of his archdeacons, to give him the same benefits which he would have enjoyed as an incumbent. Accordingly, he instituted a prosecution in the Court of Arches, and Mr. Oakeley was condemned by the judgment of Sir Herbert Jenner Fust.

The opinion of Bishop Blomfield on the various secessions to Rome which took place about this time, may be seen from the following extracts. The first is from a letter to a clergyman whose friends were in the act of seceding; and the original letter is an instance of the pains which the Bishop would often take in private correspondence, on a subject that interested him, overwhelmed as he often was with business; for it extends over thirteen pages of large quarto size, and contains several passages transcribed from theological writers.

“FULHAM, *June 23, 1845.*

“It is unhappily true, that those persons who contemplate a change of religion, seldom consult their friends till their minds are pretty well made up on the subject, and so deny their most attached and faithful counsellors an opportunity of endeavouring to remove their doubts; while they lend a ready ear to the insinuations and objections of those who seek to unsettle their belief, or their attachment to the Church of which they are members. I know not whether this has been the case with the friends to whom your letter refers; but I know it to be a very common case, and

the reason of it is obvious. The consequences of such a change are so awfully important; its sinfulness, if made upon insufficient grounds, is so great, that the persons to whom it suggests itself, or who are urged to it by others, are afraid, in the first instance, of alarming and distressing those to whom they are bound by ties of natural affection or of friendship; and oftentimes the very suppression and concealment of their doubts and misgivings strengthens and increases them, when a free and unreserved communication of them, as they arose, to pious and intelligent friends, would lead to their removal.

....I understand that your friends have adopted the opinion, that the English Church is schismatic; that is to say, that it separated itself unlawfully from the Church of Rome. But it did *not* separate itself (even supposing that national Churches ought not to be independent, which we do not admit). It renounced the more palpable and unscriptural errors of that Church, and the assumed supremacy of the Bishop of Rome; but it did not renounce communion with that Church in essentials. Nor did the Court of Rome itself consider that the Reformed Church of England was schismatical, in the full sense of the term; for the English Roman Catholics were permitted to attend, and did attend, the services of our Church for several years after its Reformation; and it was not till the issuing of the famous Bull which excommunicated Queen Elizabeth, that they ceased to do so.

But the independence of the British Church, and its entire exemption from papal jurisdiction before the time of Augustin, have been so fully established, and the schismatical conduct of the Roman Church itself, in cutting us off from its communion, has been so irrefragably proved by Archbishop Bramhall and others, and the Pope's claim of supremacy (we would allow him

that of *primacy* perhaps) so effectually demolished by Barrow, in his most unanswerable Treatise, that it moves one's wonder to hear of any person brought up within the pale of the English Church speaking of it as being in a state of schism. Have we, or the Romanists, departed farthest from the primitive Church and the Word of God? The answer to this question will determine which of us has incurred the guilt of schism. . . .

. . . . I would especially recommend to the perusal of your friends Bishop Jeremy Taylor's 'Letter to a Lady seduced to the Church of Rome;' but I shall not be surprised if you should be unable to persuade them to read *anything* on the subject, for, as I have before observed, their minds were probably made up before they gave you any intimation even of their doubts. You will, however, do well to admonish them very seriously that if they commit a schismatical act, and sin against the Holy Spirit, for want of a full examination of the questions at issue between the Churches, according to the measure of information within their reach, they will be guilty of a very grievous and aggravated sin. I greatly fear that you can do them no real good, except by praying that their eyes may be opened to the truth." . . .

The second extract is from the Bishop's Charge of 1846. Speaking of the publication, by clergymen of the Church of England, of books of devotion taken almost exclusively from Roman Catholic sources, he says :—

"I confess that I cannot understand how any person, professing to be a member of our branch of the Church Catholic, can reconcile it to his conscience to be in any way accessory to proceedings the effect of which, upon the minds of those who are imperfectly instructed, must be to diminish the seeming importance of those fun-

damental differences which separate the Churches of England and Rome ; to make them dissatisfied with the doctrine and discipline of the one, and to habituate them to regard with complacency, and in due time with affection, the worst errors of the other. I can understand this conduct on the part of one of that Society to whom it is permitted to disguise their real sentiments, and to assume any character which best enables them to propagate the errors of Rome ; but I cannot comprehend the self-delusion by which any person pursuing this course can persuade himself that he is faithful to his solemn engagements as a clergyman of the English Church. I cannot but regard such a policy as more to be censured and feared than open, honest, undisguised hostility. Deeply as I deplore the loss of those who, from being amongst our Church's ablest and most zealous defenders, have become her bitterest revilers and assailants, I would rather see a member of our communion pass over at once to the adversary's camp, and from thence hurl defiance and reproach against those whom he has deserted, than that he should continue amongst us only for the dishonest purpose (and such purpose has, in one instance at least, been openly avowed) of trying how much of the Romish system can be engrafted upon our own—in other words, how much of error can be engrafted upon truth ; for this, and nothing less than this, if we hold in good faith the doctrine embodied in our Articles of Religion, we must believe to be the difference.

.... The efforts which have for some time past been systematically made, to revive, amongst the members of our own communion, opinions and practices which have been usually regarded as peculiar to the Church of Rome, necessarily tend to perplex and unsettle sensitive and imperfectly-instructed consciences, and to prepare them for an acknowledgment of the paramount authority

of that Church, which, as it concedes nothing, nor admits the possibility of its erring, even in the minutes features of that complicated system which was stamped with the character of unchangeableness by the decree of the Council of Trent, has manifestly a great advantage in dealing with unstable and doubtful minds, when even one step has been taken in advance towards that system. This is especially the case with females, the natural constitution of whose minds disposes them to rest upon the authority of others ; while their livelier sensibilities are more easily excited and satisfied by an æsthetic and ceremonial form of religion. Indeed, it is in minds of this class, even in our own sex also, with some exceptions, that a Romanising tendency is most perceptible. Some few there are, who seem to have been caught in the meshes of their own subtilty ; others appear to be perplexed by erudition ill-digested and misapplied ; but a great number of those persons who have been unhappily perverted (and, after all, how inconsiderable is that number in comparison with those who hold fast the truth without wavering,) seem to have been misled by the treacherous light of a poetical mysticism, following the guidance, not of their reason, but of imagination ; or to have fallen a prey to Romish sophistry, for want of sound and well-digested theological learning. ....

.... It very commonly happens, that persons improperly instructed in the grounds of their own faith, who have quitted the bosom of their own Church for that of Rome, in consequence of doubts suggested by the writings or conversation of subtle disputants, assign as the sole reason of their sad change, the comfort which they longed for, and imagine they have found, in the shelter of an infallible authority, which resolves, or, rather, crushes, all their doubts, and spares them the trouble and responsibility of thinking and judging for

themselves. They tell you, that inward conviction is far better than argumentative demonstration ; that they have found a harbour of refuge ; that they *feel*, though they cannot *prove*, themselves to be safe.

But is it not marvellous, that any person who has even a tolerable acquaintance with the volume of inspiration and the records of history, should ever be persuaded to venture his salvation upon so frail a bark as that of papal infallibility ? that infallibility, which, at different times, has stamped with its impress the most discordant and irreconcilable dogmas and practices ; which in one, Gregory, solemnly disclaimed and renounced a supremacy over his brethren, and in another anathematized all who should call that supremacy in question ; which condemned, in the synodical decree of Trent, all those who denied inspiration to the apocryphal books, having previously canonised Jerome, who notoriously held them to be uninspired ; that infallibility respecting which the most learned doctors of Rome have never been able to determine where it resides, whether in the Pope alone, or in the Pope and a General Council jointly, or in the Church at large ; and which, wherever it may be said to reside, has not answered its alleged purpose, having been, in fact, most instrumental in promoting schism, and in breaking the unity of the Church."

After some more words on papal infallibility, the Bishop concludes the subject by touching on the theory of "development" recently propounded by Mr. Newman, which he denounces as "undermining the very foundations of the Christian faith," as "involving in itself the radical principle of infidelity," and as one from which "the common sense and honesty of every

mind which is tolerably well informed, and believes the Bible to contain the Word of God, would at once revolt, as being inconsistent with the essential characteristics of the Gospel revelation."

In the year 1845, in accordance with the new arrangements of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, the county of Essex and a part of Hertfordshire were taken from the diocese of London and added to that of Rochester. On the occasion of this separation, Bishop Blomfield received addresses from the clergy of those districts, about 440 in number, expressing their sense of the benefits which they had enjoyed under his episcopal superintendence, and their regret at ceasing to be officially connected with him.

"But, my Lord," they said, "while our approaching separation from a chief pastor such as you have been to us, is productive, as it must be, of painful feelings, we cannot help viewing your consent to the re-arrangement of your diocese, as a proof that you place above personal considerations of any kind, whatever is thought likely, upon mature deliberation, to confer a real benefit upon the Church. You have not concealed from us, that you have a peculiar regard for that part of your diocese which lies in the county of Essex. It was in this county that you first exercised, as a curate, your ministerial functions—in this county you resided for some time as an incumbent—it was here that you first attained to an office of dignity in the Church—and over this county you were at length called, by the providence of God, to preside as its chief pastor. The severance of a connexion such as this, extending over so many years, and endeared by so many early and pleasing associations, cannot, we are sure, be regarded



and felt by your lordship otherwise than as a severe trial. To this, for the welfare of the Church, you have submitted. But, my Lord, to your clergy, who have enjoyed the privilege of your friendly counsel and pastoral advice, and who find that our connexion with your lordship, as our Diocesan, is upon the point of closing, you will forgive us for saying that such an arrangement, however expedient, is the cause of heartfelt regret."

"To each of us individually," said the clergy of the Archdeaconry of Colchester, "it is a subject of fervent thankfulness that our lot has been cast under your lordship's spiritual rule. . . . To your clergy, whatever their age or rank, your lordship has been uniformly accessible ; nor can they be insensible to the prompt attention ever paid to their reasonable wishes, and the sympathy kindly offered to them in the hour of sorrow or of difficulty. While the spiritual necessities of the vast metropolis, which might well have wearied, if not exhausted, the vigour and resources of the most active mind, have never been neglected, we acknowledge with gratitude that your lordship's wholesome influence has penetrated even to the remotest villages committed to your pastoral superintendence."

In the course of his reply to these addresses, the Bishop said :—

"In truth, reverend brethren, I have never ceased to feel, nor to desire that you also should feel, that although I had been called to the office of your Bishop, I was still, in heart and affection, one of yourselves ; a fellow-labourer with you in the same work. Most truly can I declare, that I carried with me, as a preparation for the duties and responsibilities of the higher station, all

the sympathies and associations of a parish priest. My own personal experience has at once disposed and enabled me to enter into all the difficulties and encouragements of my brethren, whether pursuing their quiet course of useful labour, as the spiritual guardians of a rural population, or bearing a heavier burthen, and plying a more unpromising task, under the painful feeling that their unassisted energies are inadequate to the religious wants of their people."

The re-arrangement of the diocese of London was part of a plan which included also the better provision of episcopal superintendence through the country generally. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners at first proposed to effect this object without increasing the number of bishops, by uniting small dioceses with others already existing, and creating, out of the revenues of the former, new episcopal seats where they were most needed. To this scheme Bishop Blomfield gave his adhesion, not as the best possible, but as the most feasible ; and it had already been acted upon in the case of Bristol, the union of which with Gloucester was followed by the creation of the see of Ripon. But when it was proposed to unite St. Asaph with Bangor, in order to make Manchester the seat of a new bishopric, the plan met with a very strong opposition, which was headed in the House of Lords by Earl Powis. The subject was discussed in every session for some years, and Bishop Blomfield at first defended the union of the sees ; but when he found that there was a prospect of creating the see of Manchester without sacrificing that of St. Asaph, provided the number of bishops sitting as *peers* were not increased, he withdrew his opposition to the motion of Lord Powis. When

Lord John Russell succeeded Sir Robert Peel as premier, in June, 1846, a promise was given by the Government that four new bishoprics should be created ; but beyond the erection of Manchester into a see, that promise has never been performed. The following extract from Bishop Blomfield's private diary will serve to record both his own munificence and the inability or unwillingness of Whig Governments to redeem pledges given to the Church :—

“Oct. 28, 1846.—Met the Archbishop at Lord John Russell's ; present, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Lansdowne, Sir George Grey, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Discussed the St. Asaph and Bangor question. Lord John said that both should be preserved, a bishopric of Manchester erected, and three others ; but no additional bishops in the House of Lords—the four juniors not to be in the House. The two Archbishops, and the Bishops of London, Durham, and Winton, to be always in the House. I said that the ultimate surplus of the Episcopal Fund would be nearly £20,000 a year ; that means might be found for endowing Manchester immediately ; that I would give £1,000 a year from the see of London—of the revenues of which I intended to keep the control while I held the see. The Archbishop and I said we approved of the increase of bishops, but as to the question of the House of Lords, we must reserve our opinion till we had consulted our brethren ; but that for the present the matter was to be kept secret.”

Some extracts from Bishop Blomfield's correspondence at this period, on theological and general subjects, may be added here.

*Auricular Confession must not be inculcated in the Church of England.*

“FULHAM, July 6, 1848.

“DEAR SIR,—The Church of England points out to her members the methods to which they may have recourse, in order to quiet their own consciences, so as to prepare themselves for communicating at the Table of the Lord: and if there be any who, by the use of those means, cannot quiet his own conscience, he is advised to go to some discreet and learned minister of God’s Word, and open his grief: but the Church does not sanction any demand of confession beyond this, except in the case of a sick person, ‘if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter.’ But your sermon goes far beyond this, and does, in fact, insist upon the necessity of auricular confession, one of the most pernicious abuses of the Church of Rome, condemned and refuted in the ‘Homily on Repentance.’ In this respect, therefore, your sermon is erroneous, and the general tone of it very objectionable: besides which, several expressions are open to most serious objection, as verging upon Papal assumption; it is probable that you may not have intended them in that sense, but they could have been understood in no other by your hearers. You speak of ‘giving man a *share in the pardoning of sins*,’ of God’s having ‘appointed a priesthood to *act as his vicars on earth*,’ and of his having promised to register in heaven *what the Church does upon earth in vindication of his honour*.’ You assert generally that ‘a sincere penitent is *positively bound by the terms of the Gospel* to apply to *God’s vicergerent* upon earth for remission of sins!’ (no possible writer ever went beyond this)—and that such a penitent, if he cannot convince either priest or bishop of his sincerity, must consider their refusal to absolve

him as an awful lecture to him of the danger and dreadfulness of sin, as David, though he knew that his sin was forgiven him, submitted patiently to the cursing of Shimei; from which it is to be inferred, that a sincere penitent may know his sins to be forgiven, although neither priest nor bishop will absolve him. You assert that, in consequence of the clergy not having taken a just view of their office, with respect to the priestly power and authority, the result has been, '*for the most part, an inefficient, godless clergy, and an indifferent and sceptical people—the former, totally ignorant of their office and power; the latter,*' &c. This is a most scandalous and unwarrantable libel upon the clergy and people of our Church, but especially on the former.

In p. 25, you directly assert the duty of auricular confession, on the grounds taken by popish divines—'*all the sins of the people will be known to their minister;*' and you conclude by exhorting your hearers '*not to keep you in the dark as to their state.*'

I wish to give you an opportunity of retracting or explaining these erroneous positions; but I really do not see how I can safely entrust the care of a large body of poor ignorant people to a teacher who either holds these opinions, or asserts them so broadly and offensively, without a clear understanding of what he says; especially when there is reason to fear that they are only a *part* of a theological system, which I consider to be in many of the leading at variance with the doctrines of our Church."

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*On the Nature of Priestly Intercession.*

"Nov. 11, 1843.

".... I am very much obliged to you for your long and interesting communication, although I am quite

ashamed of having given you the trouble of writing it. I doubt, after all, whether there is much difference between us as to priestly intercession, except it be a question of degrees. But a point of so much interest should be established by clear proofs; and I must confess that I think some of those which you have adduced are wanting in solidity, notwithstanding that you may have taken them from the armoury of some of our greatest theological champions, and *one* untenable assertion weakens a good cause. For example, there is no doubt but that sacrifice was offered to God by the patriarchs, as it had been by Cain and Abel; but we have no evidence whatever that before the Mosaic dispensation such priests were formally ordained and consecrated, and therefore it is not safe to argue upon that assumption with respect to the prerogatives and powers of the Christian ministry. Indeed, it requires great skill and caution to use the arguments drawn from the analogy of one dispensation to another—an argument grossly misused by the writers of the Church of Rome, and in no trifling degree by those of our own. Nor is it quite safe in all cases to reason from the economy of the Apostolic Church to that of later ages. In the passage of St. James it is most probable that he directs the Elders to be sent for to the sick man, because they alone, or more than others, possessed the gifts of healing, as Gomarius supposes, or that special gift of faith which was vouchsafed to the first believers. In either case the words of the Apostle can hardly be regarded as a proof of the efficacy of priestly intercession in all ages.

I think that from the undoubted commission of the Christian ministry to dispense the Sacraments, and from their possessing the power of the keys, a stronger argument for the efficacy of their acts of intercession might be drawn than some of those which you have produced.”

*To the Bishop of Calcutta.—The Church Missionary Society—a new Bishopric at Agra—Church affairs at home.*

“LONDON, April 25, 1844.

“.... On Monday evening next (the 29th), I am to preach the anniversary sermon of the Church Missionary Society. Efforts have been made to deter me from doing this; but as I have thought fit to join the Society, I could not consistently decline the duty. I cannot say that I am entirely satisfied with its constitution, or with the conduct of its committees; nevertheless, I am persuaded that I shall do more good to the Church by assisting it, and cooperating with it as far as I can, than by retracing the steps I have taken; nor do I doubt but that its leading members are actuated by an honest desire to conduct the Society's operations upon sound Church principles; but they have many impediments to overcome, and it must be done gradually and with care....

The question of a new bishopric at Agra is one which has long occupied my thoughts, and respecting which I have had some indirect communications with leading men at the India House, but no progress has been made. I am therefore very glad to find that you have broken ground in the matter. It is most important that a bishopric should be founded for Northern India. You remember, no doubt, that in the Declaration issued from Lambeth, in 1841, and signed by all the Bishops, mention was made of Northern and Southern India as requiring the establishment of separate bishoprics. Whatever I can do to promote your views in this respect, I will do most readily and zealously....

I am disposed to think that at home the aspect of Church affairs is rather more encouraging. Things are quieter at Oxford. The concurrent, or nearly concurrent

judgment of the Bishops on the leading novelties of the Oxford Tracts, has produced its proper effect. I am, however, fully prepared to hear of the open secession of Mr. — from the English Church, who will probably carry with him some twenty or thirty young and ardent men, but not —. Indeed, I cannot understand what it is that keeps Mr. — in communion with us, except it be the fear of not taking over with him to Rome a respectable number of converts. The Archbishop, I am thankful to say, is wonderfully well, and my own health is now at length quite re-established. I very often think and speak of you, and, I need not add, pray for you, with feelings of thankfulness that you have been so wonderfully spared to consolidate and extend the Indian Church. But you ought to have some respite from your labours, and a *part* of your work should be taken from you altogether by one or more additional Bishops."

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*To the same.—Christianity in India.*

"FULHAM, Oct. 14, 1844.

"MY DEAR LORD,—I am much pleased to hear of the move which you are making for the establishment of a new bishop's see for the North of India, and I heartily wish that your representations may prevail with the rulers of that vast empire. When will they be fully awakened to a sense of their Christian responsibilities in that character? When will they do something effectual towards paying off the enormous arrears due to their heathen subjects, who have so long been suffered to remain without an effort made on the part of their rulers, to bring them to a knowledge of that name whereby alone they can be saved? Would this were all that our country has to answer for! But when we con-



sider that Christianity has not only been without encouragement in India, that its march has not only been not accelerated, but purposely retarded, it becomes an awful question, whether the evil can ever be repaired. However, let us be thankful for the steps which of late have been taken in a better direction. The suppression of Suttees, and the withdrawal of Government countenance and encouragement from some of the worst horrors of paganism, afford some grounds of hope. . . .”

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*To the Archbishop of Canterbury.—Need of organized Lay assistants in the work of the Church.*

“FULHAM, Jan. 11, 1847.

“MY DEAR LORD ARCHBISHOP,—At a time when your grace’s mind is of necessity very much occupied with the important questions which have been proposed to us by Her Majesty’s Government, I am very reluctant to intrude upon you with any other subject; nor would I do so, were it one of inferior moment, or of less pressing urgency than it appears to me, and to others who think with me, to be. My attention, and that of some of the bishops of the more populous dioceses, has been forcibly directed, by many zealous and influential laymen, of all parties in the Church, as well as by our own experience of the spiritual wants of the people, to some plan for increasing the means of supplying those wants, and of multiplying the agents by whom the work of Christian teaching is to be carried on; and we are strongly disposed to think that such an increase of teachers will be best effected by facilitating admission into the diaconate, and by employing an order or class of laymen as readers or catechists, who shall be recognised by the Church, and placed under certain regulations, having the force of law.

With respect to this latter object, I may observe that the plan of Scripture Readers, which is now in operation to a considerable extent in the dioceses of London and Winchester, works extremely well, and has effected a great amount of good; but we cannot shut our eyes to the inconvenience and risk which may result from the circumstance of their not being a formally recognised body of teachers, nor placed, so effectually as they ought to be, under the control and direction of the bishops.

In some of the poor and populous parishes of the metropolis, these Scripture Readers have certainly found their way to a great number of poor ignorant people who were inaccessible to the clergy, and have brought the parents to the teaching of the Church, and the children to the national schools. The good which they have effected is undoubted and extensive. With respect to the plan of a more easy admission into the diaconate, we are strongly of opinion that it would be most advantageous to the Church, and that under proper regulations it will not lower the standard of clerical acquirements or respectability. . . .”

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*Against Latitudinarian views of the Church's doctrine,  
and Erastian views of her authority.*

“LONDON HOUSE, Feb. 22, 1847.

“MY DEAR SIR,—I have read your sermon, and do not wonder at its having excited some sensation.

While I cannot be otherwise than pleased with its earnest and affectionate tone, I think it calculated to give offence, not only to those of the clergy who hold very high opinions, as the term is commonly understood, but to many moderate and sober-minded men. Indeed, it appears to me that, if your view of the Church and ministry be correct, it will not be easy to say what

heresy or schism is, nor what persons are guilty of those sins.

You state, in page 4, on the strength of the Second Article, that our Church does not admit that what it says collectively, in its Councils, or what its ministers say individually, should be received with like authority as though it had been spoken by the Apostles. Of course it does not; but that is not the question. Our Church does assert, by its Councils, that the interpretation which it puts upon the words of the Apostles, is the true interpretation. It admits that Councils may err; but it does not, nor could it without absurdity, admit that in its own Council it *has* erred, when it determined the Articles of Religion. These it explicitly declares to 'contain the *true doctrine* of the Church of England, agreeable to *God's Word*,' and its decrees upon all the grand articles of the Christian faith are precise and dogmatical. As long as the clergy adhere to those Articles in their teaching (which they solemnly promise to do), so long she considers them to teach the truth, and no longer; and this truth she holds that they teach, as being the truth taught by the Apostles; and apostolical doctrine has apostolical authority. If any one of her ministers think she has erred in any fundamental point, he is not, on that account, at liberty to teach otherwise; but he is at liberty to leave her communion. In this sense, 'the Church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith'—*i. e.*, authority over her own members, who, if they are persuaded that she enforces anything to be believed, for necessity of salvation, against Holy Writ, must cease to act as her members. A minister of our Church, then, must reason thus: The Church teaches that such and such doctrines are the doctrines of Holy Scripture. I have declared my belief that they *are* so, and that I would teach other persons

accordingly. These, then, are the doctrines which the Church has declared to be agreeable to the mind of the Apostles and inspired writers; and I propound them to you as such. In this sense, the Church may be considered to speak with Apostolical authority. Although, therefore, it is true that our Church admits that it *may* err, in Council it asserts that it has *not* erred; nor does it admit that any of its clergy *will* err, as long as his teaching is conformable to the sense which the Church puts upon Scripture.

All this is very clearly stated by Bishop Marsh, in his 'Comparative View of the Churches of England and Rome,' but I have not the book at hand to refer to. It is true that all 'authoritative revelation' (p. 6) closed with the apostolic times; but not so as to all authoritative interpretation; although *authoritative*, as applied to interpretation, is not used in the same sense as that which it bears when applied to revelation. So far, then, in my judgment, are you from being right, in telling your people that you cannot desire them to accept what the Church affirms, as the true interpretation of the mysteries of God, that it is your bounden duty to do so; for while you declared, at your ordination, that you would 'instruct the people committed to your charge out of the Scriptures,' and teach nothing, as required of necessity to eternal salvation, but that which you should be persuaded might be concluded and proved by the Scriptures, you at the same time gave a distinct promise, 'so to minister the *doctrine* and *Sacraments*, and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this *Church and Realm* hath received the same.' What is this, but to promise that you would desire the people to accept what the Church affirms, as undoubtedly the true interpretation of the Word of God? And, unless you have some fixed and definite test whereby to determine what

is or is not the true interpretation, how are you to fulfil that other promise, to 'banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word?'

In page 7, you hold that he is 'a lawful minister, who has been called by any congregation of faithful men.' According to this, every teacher of every dissenting congregation in England is a *lawful minister*. But this the Church of England neither holds nor admits in her Articles, nor anywhere else.

No doubt her Twenty-third Article was framed so as not to give needless offence to the Reformed Churches abroad; but it does not say what you say—that he is a lawful minister who is *chosen by a congregation*, which is the principle of the Congregationalists or Independents, but 'those are lawfully called and sent, which be chosen and called to this work *by men who have public authority given them*, not by A congregation but *in THE congregation*,' *i.e.* in the general assembly of the Church (Article Nineteen); and with regard to our *own* congregation, or visible Church, it is plainly declared in the Preface to her ordinal, that bishops are the persons who have that authority; but it is nowhere said that this authority is given them *by the congregation*. I cannot but consider your whole statement on this point to be very loose and dangerous. To say the least of it, it places the clergy in all respects, except their recognition by the State, on the same footing as dissenting ministers of every description; for if your position be true, the man who ministers to half-a-dozen Ranters, or Sandemanians, or Muggletonians, is just as lawful a minister, as to spirituals, as he who has been episcopally ordained. This cannot be otherwise than highly offensive to nine-tenths of the body whose commission is thus disparaged. But on this subject I need not enlarge, as my own sentiments are well known, from my sermons on the Church, of which I request you to accept the copy sent herewith.

A more objectionable assertion still occurs at p. 13, that the Church in this country is *created* by the law. You cannot, surely, mean to say that the Church, as defined in the Nineteenth Article is a creature of the law ; for that would be to make the purity of its doctrines and the due administration of the Sacraments depend upon human enactments. That which is extrinsic to the Church's spiritual polity may be derived from the law, such as the honour paid by the State to its chief ministers, the security of its endowments, the necessity of an external profession of Church membership to the enjoyment of certain civil rights or privileges ; but these do not in any sense constitute the Church—which, if its doctrines be true and its orders valued, would continue to be the Church, even were all these adventitious accidents done away. The Church might even be crippled in the exercise of its functions by the interference of the State, but it would still be the Church, and would show that as the State did not create it, so neither can the State destroy it.

If the principles laid down in the first portion of your sermon be true, then I do not see how you can avoid following them out to their legitimate consequences, and admitting that there may be, what you deprecate in p. 20, 'a religion of separate individuals, each making his own peace with God,' each judging for himself what is religious truth, each, in short, being to himself his own Church.

I really cannot help entertaining a hope that upon further consideration you will see reason to alter some of your conclusions, as being calculated, in their ultimate results, to lead to great uncertainty and confusion, unsettling the foundations of all Church authority, and leaving imperfectly instructed persons altogether at a loss for the interpretation of Scripture, and the right participation of the Sacraments of Grace."

*Religious Fraternities in the Church undesirable, unless  
under the direction of its Rulers.*

“LONDON HOUSE, April 3, 1847.

“ . . . . My objections to the association upon which I animadverted in my Charge were chiefly grounded upon the danger of ‘forming, or binding together, a *secret party* in the Church, and of teaching them the necessity of doing something more than the Church instructs them to do, or of doing it in a different manner.’ The registration of members, with a view to their being informed, from time to time, of particular objects to be prayed for, either of a public or private nature, plainly supposes the existence of one or more directors and heads of the fraternity, whose instructions are issued to the members—a feature which at once invests the plan with the character of a church within a church, or at least a government within a government, and which I cannot but consider to be dangerous to the unity and peace of the Church.

This, added to the direction respecting the Holy Communion, made me think the plan very objectionable; and what I have since heard of its working, confirms me in my objections:

The association described in your letter appears to me not to differ in any material point, except that of privacy, from the religious societies, or ‘pious fellowships of youth,’ for the reformation of manners, which originated with Dr. Horneck and Mr. Smithies, towards the end of the seventeenth century, and of which Dr. Woodward published an account, with an appendix of directions and devotions.

The objects and rules of these societies were, after a time, made known to the Bishop of London, who approved of them, and afterwards to Archbishop Tillotson,

who did the same. For myself, I think that such associations may be productive of much good, if wisely and carefully conducted, with a strict adherence to the rules of our Reformed Church; but that if they are placed under the government and direction of other persons than the rulers of the Church, who have authority to direct the performance of certain duties which are not specifically stated in their rules; and if those rules are altered from time to time, without proper sanction, they may become very dangerous to the Church.

Of course all such associations are open to the objection that they bind men, by a mutual engagement to one another, to do that which all are bound to do by their baptismal engagement, and by their duty as members of the Church; in other words, that they seek to enforce, by inferior motives, that which ought to be the result of obedience to superior—an objection which has been urged against temperance societies.

But I do not think that this objection, though not without weight, is unanswerable."

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*From Sir Robert Inglis.—Report of the Bishop's Death.—  
State of Religion in Prussia.*

"BERLIN, Aug. 30, 1847.

"MY DEAR LORD,—I hardly knew how much I loved and valued you till, at Potsdam, I heard of your death. The Minister 'des Cultes' (Eichhorn) mentioned it as a fact which he had read in the *Journal des Débats*. Almost the first observation which the King made was, 'He gave me his Prayers: my good wife is very fond of them.' We remained in much discomfort (I wished I could have said *anxiety*, which admits of hope) until the next day, when it appeared that the death in question was that of Bishop Griffiths, the Vicar Apostolic of the



London District. Possibly you may never have been aware that there had been any such confusion made anywhere, or that any 'éloge funèbre' had been pronounced over you. May it please God long to spare you to his Church on earth. I am sure that even when we have most differed (and differ, I fear, we shall continue to do occasionally), I have never had any other feeling towards you than that, whether in Church reform or in discipline, you never had any other object but the glory of our Lord in the efficiency of the Establishment.

I should not, of course, presume to speak from my own observation on the state of ecclesiastical matters here. It would be like the Frenchman spending twenty-five minutes by a stop-watch in the Old Bailey, and saying that he had obtained a complete view of the criminal jurisprudence of England; but I have seen so much of good men here (the Rev. Baron O. v. Gerlach, and Abeken, for instance, both of whom you have known in England), that on their authority I may say, that while rationalism is declining among the professors and the clergy, it is far otherwise among the middle classes; and as some evidence of this fact, they quoted an address to the King, presented recently, praying for 'liberty of conscience,' and specifying as such the right of each clergyman to preach in each church whatever he might please—socialism, neology, or any form of infidelity. If such a prayer were granted, one should not regret what, in actual circumstances, one cannot see without concern, that in Berlin, with 400,000 souls, there are only fourteen parish churches, about five adjuncts, and the aggregate of all places of worship—synagogue as well as Roman Catholic—not more than thirty. I counted the list with Abeken. . . ."

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*To a Churchwarden, who objected to the Cross as a  
Popish Symbol.*

“FULHAM, Dec. 2, 1847.

“.... You designate the cross as a *popish symbol*. No doubt the sign of the cross *may* be so used as to favour superstitious notions; but it is not in itself a popish symbol, nor do I see anything superstitious in employing the figure of a simple cross (not, you will observe, a *crucifix*) as a decoration of our churches, or of the books or vessels used in Divine worship. I need not remind you how commonly this symbol is to be seen on the coverings of our communion tables, and on the communion plate; but I cannot help expressing my surprise that a member of the Church of England, which directs the use of the sign of the cross in baptism, should object to that sign as a popish symbol.

I should be sorry to think that, in the discharge of your important duties as churchwarden, you suffered a just vigilance to degenerate into a suspicious cavilling. In the prudent exercise of the one, I am ready to encourage and uphold the churchwardens, who are my officers; but all unnecessary and unkind interference with the conduct and arrangements of the clergy, I feel myself bound to resist. ....”

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*To the Rev. W. Dodsworth.—Roman Catholic books on  
the Lord's Supper not to be distributed.*

“LONDON HOUSE, March 18, 1848.

“I hope you will not be offended, if I express some surprise that you should have allowed your curate to distribute a book on the Sacrament of the Lord's

Supper, avowedly the work of a Roman Catholic priest, and not even professedly edited by a clergyman of our Church, without having first carefully examined its contents. The subject of the book was in itself a sufficient indication of its containing erroneous doctrine. The sacramental aspect of the Church is precisely that in which, with respect to one of its most important features, our Church is opposed to that of Rome; and I cannot conceive how any clergyman can think himself justified in 'giving scope to the sympathies' of any of his people, by recommending the use of devotional books which embody not only a doctrine, which, according to our Twenty-eighth Article, 'overthroweth the nature of a sacrament,' but also an assertion of what our Thirty-first Article declares to be 'blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits.' I have no scruple in condemning such a condescension to mistaken sympathies, as inconsistent with the respect due to God's truth, and an encouragement of perilous error. I should certainly revoke the licence of any curate who could be shown to have distributed such a book as that now before me, and should refuse to countersign his testimonials...."

## CHAPTER V.

ACCIDENT TO BISHOP BLOMFIELD IN 1847—ITS RESULTS—DR. HAMPDEN MADE BISHOP OF HEREFORD—DEATH OF ARCHBISHOP HOWLEY—THE TRACTARIAN PARTY IN LONDON—CORRESPONDENCE ON PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD—THE CHOLERA IN 1849.

THE year 1847 was a busy one in the life of Bishop Blomfield; but it is chiefly interesting as being the turning point, after which his health and strength began noticeably to decline, until they broke down altogether eight years later. The occasion, though probably not the cause of this change, was an accident which happened to him at Osborne, when summoned to attend a meeting of the Privy Council, called for the purpose of appointing a day of Thanksgiving for the abundant harvest which had succeeded the famine of the earlier part of the year. In walking through one of the passages, he slipped on the polished floor, and fell in such a way as to bruise his right temple. For the moment, he felt little harm from this accident; but its ill effects soon began to manifest themselves. Something like paralysis began to appear in the part which had suffered from the blow; the right side of his face was drawn on one side, and the eyelid refused to close; and his speech was partially affected. The Bishop himself did not connect his illness with the accident at Osborne; he writes, soon after it had occurred, "A bad cold, caught

in my journey to and from Osborne last Tuesday, brought on swelling and pain in my face, which made it impossible for me to go to Boulogne, as I had proposed, to-day." But his medical attendants agreed in thinking that the blow, occasioned by the fall, at least hastened a seizure which might otherwise have been indefinitely postponed. Galvanism and other remedies were tried without producing much result. He was unable to preach or to take his usual part in public affairs for about five months; and when he did resume his former habits, he was never quite the man he had been. Those who knew him well will remember the nervous twitching of the muscles of the face, and the constant movement of the hand to the cheek, as if in pain, which were noticeable in him during the last few years of his life; and his correspondents may have noticed that his handwriting, which had been unusually clear and legible, began now sensibly to deteriorate. And these were the symptoms of a corresponding internal change. His mental vigour, indeed, and his powers of business, he retained almost unimpaired to the last; but he became nervous, and subject to occasional fits of depression, less uniformly cheerful and lively in his own family, less equal to general society. New troubles in the Church combined with lessening strength to make his way difficult in the last decade of his life; so that, if we may fix on any period in a man's life as his climacteric, we might name the years 1845-6 in the life of Bishop Blomfield, as the time after which his bodily powers began to wear away, by stages which those who were intimate with him could discern without difficulty.

He writes to the Bishop of Calcutta in June, 1848:—

“I met with an accident last October which injured one of the nerves of my face, and produced a superficial paralysis of the right eyelid and cheek, for which I was doctored in various ways, and interdicted from all exertion which was not absolutely unavoidable; so that, in fact, for many months I transacted no business but that which was of the most urgent nature, and wrote as few letters as possible. I am now, thank God, perfectly well in my general health, and able to get through a long course of confirmations without difficulty or fatigue; but I am not yet entirely free from the affection of my face, although it is now scarcely perceptible.”

It was while Bishop Blomfield was still suffering from the first effects of this attack, that Lord John Russell startled the Church by nominating, to the vacant see of Hereford, Dr. Hampden, whose appointment to the Regius Professorship of Divinity at Oxford, by Lord Melbourne, eleven years before, had given such general offence to the University, as to bring down upon the new Professor the formal censure of Convocation, on account of the alleged heretical teaching of his Bampton Lectures and other publications. Against the appointment to Hereford, a remonstrance, which is said to have given great and lasting offence in the highest quarters, was addressed to Lord John Russell by several of the bishops; and in this remonstrance, and in the correspondence which ensued upon it, the Bishop of London took an active part. The Premier declined to withdraw the obnoxious appointment, on the ground, that such a withdrawal would be “virtually an assent

to the doctrine, that a decree of the University of Oxford is a perpetual ban of exclusion against a clergyman of eminent learning and irreproachable life; and that, in fact, the supremacy, which is now by law vested in the Crown, is to be transferred to a majority of the members of one of our Universities." Eventually, when the Bishop of Oxford, Dr. Hampden's diocesan, and one of the protesting bishops, declared that on reading the works of the Bishop elect, he did not find there the heretical teaching which he had believed them to contain, all further opposition to the appointment was given up by the Bench. A difficulty which might still have occurred, was solved in another way. Archbishop Howley, to whom it would fall to consecrate the new bishop, though he had not signed the remonstrance, had concurred in its purport; and he might naturally be unwilling to give his official sanction to the appointment. But the Primate, now in his eighty-second year, was fast drawing to his end; and before it became necessary that the consecration should be performed, death released him from the duty. His successor, the Archbishop, not being one of those who had signed the protest, felt no difficulty in consecrating the Premier's nominee.

Bishop Blomfield had long regarded Archbishop Howley with the most unfeigned and affectionate veneration. Writing in 1842, when the Archbishop was seriously ill, he said, "I am greatly distressed by the dangerous illness of the good Archbishop, whom I have long loved as a father."

His death is thus recorded in Bishop Blomfield's private diary:—

"*Jan.* 11, 1848.—The good and venerable Archbishop of Canterbury died at Lambeth this morning at ten minutes past two. He would have been eighty-two years of age had he lived till the 13th. He was ever my most kind friend and counsellor. God grant that his high office may be filled by one as pious and wise as he was."

At a meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, at which resolutions of respect to the memory of the Archbishop were passed, the Bishop of London said :—

"I shall ever regard our late venerated President as one of the kindest of benefactors, and wisest of counsellors. For upwards of twenty years there has been between us the most entire concurrence of sentiment and opinion on all the great ecclesiastical questions which have, during that period, required our consideration. And I shall carry to the grave, as one of the sweetest consolations, a remembrance of the kind and friendly, but too ample acknowledgments made by his Grace for assistance which I have been enabled to render him."

He would often speak with admiration of the many excellent qualities of Archbishop Howley, both in his personal character and as a ruler of the Church. He thought that, though a more stirring man might, perhaps, have been wished for, yet, on the whole, the Archbishop had been wonderfully fitted, by his wisdom, temper, and discretion, to guide the Church in very difficult and dangerous times.

The year 1848, so eventful in European history, was not marked by any very important incidents in the life of Bishop Blomfield. The disturbances which were



anticipated in London in the spring of this year directed his attention to the religious condition of the Metropolitan Police Force. This numerous and important body of men were, he found, precluded from attending public worship on Sundays, not only because in many parishes no church accommodation was provided for them, but because their services were specially required during Divine service for the protection of property. It appeared, however, that once a week they were assembled at their several station-houses in full uniform to receive their pay, and it was suggested that an opportunity was thus afforded for inviting them to worship God. With this view Bishop Blomfield, in conjunction with the Bishop of Winchester, called a meeting of incumbents, on both sides of the Thames, in whose parishes there were station-houses, and consulted them as to the measures they would be prepared to adopt in case the concurrence of the police authorities should be obtained. The result was, that special services for the benefit of the police were established in many parts of the metropolis, either in churches or station-houses, and have been regularly attended during the last fourteen years.

The event of most interest to the Church in which he took part at this time was the opening of St. Augustine's Missionary College, at Canterbury; a noble monument of the zeal and munificence of a distinguished layman, and a great assistance to the cause of Missions, which the Bishop had so much at heart.

But though this was a year of comparative quiet to the Bishop, it was the eve of a period of no ordinary disturbance both to him and to the Church at large. Questions both of doctrine and of ritual, which had for

some little time been lying almost dormant, were now beginning again to attract attention, and ere long became the centres of an agitation which has hardly yet subsided.

It was at this time that the Bishop began to be brought into collision with a class of clergymen who had already given him some trouble, but whose peculiarities were now brought, by the circumstances of the times, into unusual prominence. These were the extreme of the so-called "Tractarian" party in the Diocese of London—many of them excellent and hard-working pastors, and holding opinions which, as experience has since proved, may be allowed within the English Church without danger to her peace or purity ; but men who, in dealing with their Diocesan, seemed to combine all the qualities most calculated to annoy and vex him, and to defeat the objects which he had most at heart. The chief characteristics of this party, in their relations with Bishop Blomfield, seem to have been—a tendency to equivocation strikingly at variance with the honesty of the man with whom they had to deal ; a profession of general submission to authority, nullified by a refusal to submit in any particular case ; and a habit of creating difficulties, and then throwing the *onus* of them upon the Bishop. If to these we were to add a *cacoethes scribendi*, and love of involving any point at issue in interminable correspondence, we should be naming a characteristic certainly not peculiar to *them* ; for every one must have either felt or witnessed what a satisfaction is found in drawing up a memorial, or protest, or resolution, or statement, and how the pleasure given by the form of such documents is sometimes so great

as to overbear any misgivings as to the relevance or truthfulness of their substance. To lead the Bishop through all the mazy intricacies of an evasive correspondence, shifting ground now from the authority of the Diocesan to that of the Church, and now from the Church of England to the Catholic Church, taking care only that one's own opinions or practices were never sacrificed, and all this with expressions of profound regret and reverent humility, contrasting strangely with occasional defiances, and almost threats,—this was regarded by some of the clergy as a profitable employment of time, and a wise method of upholding the Church of England. And if the unreasonable prejudices of the people, aggravated by the clamour of others who ought to have known better, confounded the doctrine or ritual of these clergymen with the teaching of a Church to which most of them had no leanings, and raised the cry of "No Popery," then the satisfaction of martyrdom was added to that of controversy, and the highest theological felicity was reached, when you could at once worry a Bishop, and be worried by a mob.

Not very different from this is the opinion of Archbishop Whately on the party in question :—

"Their course has always been—(1) to profess excessive submission to the authority of the Church, and veneration for Bishops, who were thus likely to be deceived into the belief that this party would prove a faithful and obedient, though, perhaps, somewhat overzealous supporter; (2) to represent the Church as consisting of *themselves* and their adherents—coming forward on various occasions in an unauthorized and irregular manner to pronounce decisions where they were not

entitled to any jurisdiction; and (3) to treat all their brother-ministers, and especially all bishops, who did not agree with them, sometimes with utter neglect, and sometimes with the grossest insolence. They remind one of Addison's 'Tory Freeholder,' who declared, 'I am for passive obedience and non-resistance; and I will oppose to the utmost any Ministry and any King that will not maintain that doctrine.'"<sup>1</sup>

The serious visitation of cholera under which the country suffered in 1849 was one of the earliest occasions which brought Bishop Blomfield directly into collision with the party just described. A London incumbent of that school took occasion to publish a "Form of prayer to be used by the faithful during the present pestilence," which contained distinct supplications for the dead as well as the dying.

On the subject of prayers for the dead, Bishop Blomfield had thus expressed his sentiments a few years before :—

"FULHAM, Dec. 16, 1844.

"It is true that the early (not the primitive) Church sanctioned the practice of praying for the dead, although with a very different object from that which the Church of Rome proposes, as has been shown by Archbishop Wake in his 'Discourse on Prayers for the Dead.' But I am bound to look to the Church of England, not to that of Antioch, or Carthage, or Rome; and I find that the Church of England, having, upon its first reformation, retained the use of prayers for the dead, thought proper, after a time, by reason of the dangerous errors likely to result from or to be encouraged by that practice, to lay it aside, and to substitute a thanksgiving for

<sup>1</sup> Memoir of Bishop Copleston, p. 56, note.

those who have departed this life in the faith and fear of God. The words 'militant here on earth' were inserted in the prefix to the prayer for the whole state of Christ's Church, 'to show,' as Dr. Cardwell observes, 'that the Church not only did not practise intercession for the dead, but carefully excluded it.' This was at the revision of the Common Prayer in 1552. The reasons which no doubt moved our Reformers to make this exclusion are clearly and pointedly stated (though without allusion to that particular prayer) in the 'Homily concerning Prayer,' 3d part, p. 231, 4to ed. 1833, which concludes, 'Let us not, therefore, dream either of purgatory, or of prayer for the souls of them that be dead,' &c. The Nonjurors, at the beginning of the last century, desired that the words 'militant here on earth' should be expunged. They did not obtain their wish. There can be no doubt, then, what the sense of our Church is in this matter, as collected from her Liturgy, Homilies, and Acts of Convocation, against which the opinions of private divines, or the decision of an ecclesiastical judge on a point of law, cannot be allowed to preponderate. I think that the revisers of our Liturgy acted wisely in discontinuing prayers for the dead. This kind of intercession is sure to be connected by the people at large with the notion of purgatory, and may easily be perverted to countenance the pernicious opinion, that the want of repentance and conversion, on the part of a sinner, during life, may be supplied, wholly or in part, by the prayers of surviving saints after his death. On the other hand, to those who have died in the faith, and sleep in Jesus, such prayers are of no advantage. The reason why our Reformers contented themselves with *omitting* prayers for the dead, without in terms condemning them, was probably an unwillingness to censure the practice of the early Church.

Archbishop Wake observes: 'We have yet a more

particular reason why it is by no means fitting at this time thus to pray for the dead ; and that is, to prevent the danger which the present practice of the Church of Rome would be apt to expose men to, should we do it. To pray for the souls departed, as that Church does, neither did the primitive Fathers ever allow, and we have sufficiently shown how dangerously erroneous it is to do so ; and however some might be able to make the distinction, and see a great difference in the design and intention of the same kind of praying, yet the ill use that is made, even of what these Holy Fathers did, sufficiently shows us how apt men are to confound those things together that have so nigh a relation as to the practice and the *act* being the same, to lead them to believe that the *principle* is so too.'

The danger to which the Archbishop alludes has certainly not ceased to exist ; and, upon the whole, I feel it to be plainly my duty, while I do not presume to interfere with the private practice of individual members of our Church, not to sanction the use of prayer for the dead in any formulary to be statedly used in a charitable institution.

I shall be extremely sorry if the effect of this decision should be to deprive this parish of the benefits which would result to it from giving effect to Mr. B——'s pious and charitable intentions ; but I am persuaded that he will see, after what I have stated, that it is not possible for me to waive my objections to the form of prayer which he has proposed."

Such being his views on this subject, when the "Form of Prayer" above mentioned was brought under his notice, he addressed a remonstrance to the author on the part which he had taken, as countenancing a practice purposely omitted, though not distinctly forbidden, by the

Church of England. In reply, the author of the prayers entered into a correspondence, which ended in his declining to entertain the objections urged by his Diocesan, unless enforced by legal authority. In the course of this correspondence, part of which was printed, the following passages occur in the Bishop's letters :—

“ I stated to you that the authorities which you had adduced had no weight with me, in opposition to the plain, acknowledged judgment of the Church of England ; that prayers for the dead were not, indeed, forbidden by any law ecclesiastical, but that the mind of the Church was clearly shown to be against the use of them, by her careful exclusion of them from the place which they once occupied in her Liturgy, and by the express condemnation of them in the Homilies. I, therefore, repeated my remonstrance, and called upon you to cancel your recommendation of such prayers, knowing very well that I could not compel you by *law* to do so, but taking for granted your readiness to ‘do what I might see fit to appoint,’ seeing that there could be no *obligation* upon you to *recommend* that of which the Church of England *disapproves*.

You now deny the lawfulness of my requisition, and decline obedience to it ; leaving me ‘to institute such an ecclesiastical cause as may decide the question.’ This is really no better than a mockery, seeing that I had plainly stated, in my second letter, that the use of such prayers was not prohibited in express terms by any law, and that the decision of the present Dean of the Arches, to which you allude, was grounded on the absence of such a prohibition.

But I thought, and still think, that I might call upon you, in virtue of your promise of canonical obedience, to abstain from teaching that which our Church has studiously abstained from teaching, as being, if not

wrong in itself, yet likely to lead men into error; as being highly inexpedient, if not positively unlawful. ....

.... With respect to your complaint, that 'you have never met with any sympathy from your Diocesan,' I shall say nothing. A little consideration of what has taken place on several occasions during the last few years will, I think, induce you to withdraw the assertion. But it is quite true that I do not sympathise with you in your wish to revive practices which are calculated to lead those of your flock who have lively imaginations, but weak judgments, to the very verge of those errors, from which you afterwards find it difficult, and sometimes impossible, to restrain them. You know very well that I have forbore any public expression of my disapproval. I have done so because I felt how much was due to your devotedness and disinterested zeal; and nothing would give me greater pain than to be forced, by a sense of duty, to break silence."

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"You state, that you had hoped to avoid the necessity of replying to my letter of the 20th November last, 'both because of the grievousness, not to say danger, in a priest writing to his Bishop in a tone of controversy, and also because of the occasion of the disputed topic having now ceased to exist, the objectionable paper being no longer in print.'

I put it to your candour to determine, whether in common courtesy, not to say respect, you ought not, at least, to have acknowledged the receipt of my letter; and whether, in fairness, you ought not to have told me that the paper to which I had objected was no longer in print. ....

.... I beg of you to consider, whether you are not open to a charge of great inconsistency, in refusing to follow the admonitions of your Bishop, and to submit



yourself, as to your public teaching, to his judgment, on the ground that an Ecclesiastical Court has decided that prayer for the dead is not forbidden by the Church of England; while you declare that, with respect to another question,<sup>1</sup> you will give no heed to the judgment of a higher Ecclesiastical Court, on account of the incompetency of the tribunal."

The following passage, from one of the letters of the Incumbent, is a specimen of the difficulties with which Bishop Blomfield had to contend, in dealing with cases of this kind:—

"In reply to this call, which, coming from your Lordship, as Bishop, must be interpreted as a command, four courses seem open to me:

1. At once to obey the command, and cancel the prayers.

2. To remain silent under the command, taking no notice of what your Lordship has said, treating it as though it had not been.

3. To resign my living, and by so doing escape from the necessity of any further collision on the subject.

4. Openly to disobey the command, and, giving my reasons for so doing, to leave further proceedings in your Lordship's hands, in order that the case may be tried by the proper ecclesiastical tribunals."

It can be no matter of surprise, that one who could see so many courses open before him, should have ended by choosing the last and worst.

Bishop Blomfield himself did not suffer the occasion of the cholera to pass by without showing the same interest in the material comforts of the poor which he had already shown by giving his active assistance to the

<sup>1</sup> That of baptismal regeneration.

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doubt. As early as 1818 he had spoken severely of those clergymen who impugned this doctrine, and in his volume of sermons, published while at Bishopsgate, he had again stated it, guardedly but distinctly. In 1836 he wrote as follows to a clergyman on the effects of Infant Baptism :—

“.... There is no passage in Scripture which warrants the notion of one person’s faith being *imputed* to another person ; and to make the efficacy of Baptism, as far as it is the means of grafting into the body of Christ’s Church, dependent upon the faith, not of the child to be baptized, but of those who bring him to the font, is to destroy the essence of the Sacrament, and involves inconsistencies which it is hardly necessary to point out. The case which you suppose to be impossible is, we all know, of every day occurrence. An infant is presented for Baptism by parties who have no *lively faith*. Is that child baptized according to our Lord’s commands or not ? If not, it must be baptized again, which no person will maintain ; but if it is, then it is grafted into the body of Christ’s Church, and *regenerate*, in the sense in which our Church employs the term. Again, take the case of a child baptized privately, the parents being dead, or out of the way, and no sponsors to answer for it. Upon whose prayers does the efficacy of that Baptism depend ? You will say, perhaps, upon those of the minister who baptizes it. But if his prayers, offered in faith, make Baptism efficacious when privately administered, why should they not be equally efficacious when it is administered in public ? and how can *their* efficacy be destroyed by the unfaithfulness of other parties who may be present ?.... The Church declares, at the end of the Office for Public Baptism, ‘It is certain, by God’s Word, that children which are baptized,

dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved.' But they cannot be saved, as far as we know, except they be regenerate. Therefore every such child is regenerate. When the Church limits the effects of Baptism to those who are *rightly* baptized, it is clear from the Office of Private Baptism that it means those who have been baptized with water, in the name of the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity. And if the Church considered that Baptism is rightly administered only when the parents or sponsors pray in faith, how could any minister take upon himself to declare, 'I certify you that in this case *all is well done*, and according to due order concerning the baptizing of this child, who, being born in original sin and in the wrath of God, is now, by the laver of regeneration in Baptism, received into the number of the children of God, and heirs of everlasting life?'

Whatever may be the notions of private persons as to the kind of regeneration which takes place in Baptism, it is abundantly clear what the *Church* means by it. If you think that you can reconcile your present opinions with the language both of the Articles and Offices of the Church, I have no right to question your sincerity. And as to preventing you from taking possession of —, the thing is done. It is a very different question, whether, with a knowledge of your opinions, I should have collated you in the first instance, and whether, having done so, I should afterwards resume the grant. I am not, however, quite without hope that, as your opinions respecting Baptism have been fluctuating for some time past, you may be led by further reading and reflection to take what I believe to be a more scriptural as well as rational view of the subject than that which you entertain at present. . . ."

Again, a few years later :—



*To the Hon. and Rev. B. W. Noel.—Not true to say that few serious persons believe in Baptismal Regeneration.*

“LONDON HOUSE, Feb. 16, 1840.

“ . . . The more I consider the bearing of your remarks, not upon Baptismal Regeneration itself, but upon the disbelief of it on the part of the great body of the clergy, the more strongly I feel that it is incumbent upon you to offer those whose honesty you have apparently impeached, some declaration that you did not intend to impeach it, and some explanation of the sense in which you used the offensive expression.

That there is one sense, at least, in which the clergy at large admit the notion of Baptismal Regeneration you certainly cannot deny. Many understand the term in another, and, as *you* think, unscriptural sense; but to assert that they are therefore not serious in their religious belief is, in a high degree, presumptuous and uncharitable.

That a great number, I believe by far the greater number, of those clergymen who are sometimes termed (properly enough as to the fact, but improperly if by way of distinction) *serious* clergymen receive Baptismal Regeneration in some sense, appears from what Mr. Bickersteth, who, I suppose, will be admitted as a fair and able exponent of their views, has very recently stated in his work on Baptism. ‘In this view the Church of Christ admits and recognises the regeneration of the baptized.’ ‘Regeneration, as an entrance into Church privileges, always accompanies Baptism, whatever may be the future course of the baptized.’

In this sense of the words there are few, I apprehend, of the clergy who are not ready to admit the notion of Baptismal Regeneration; and therefore, even though you thought a belief in the higher notion of it inconsistent with seriousness (which you have surely no right

to assert), you were not warranted in saying that few serious persons believe in Baptismal Regeneration. As you have put your name to this pamphlet, I think you are bound, in justice and charity, to retract your assertion in print."

In his Charge of 1842 he said, "The opinion which denies Baptismal Regeneration might possibly, though not without great difficulty, be reconciled with the language of the Twenty-seventh Article; but by no stretch of ingenuity, or latitude of explanation, can it be brought to agree with the plain unqualified language of the Offices for Baptism and Confirmation."

It was no matter of surprise, therefore, when, in March, 1850, the Committee of the Privy Council reversed the decision of the Court of Arches, that while the two Archbishops concurred in the judgment, the Bishop of London dissented from it. The amount of latitude which he was prepared to concede, and the extent to which Mr. Gorham seemed to him to have exceeded that latitude, will be seen by the following extracts from his Charge of 1850, in which he goes into the whole question at great length.

"When, in obedience to Her Majesty's commands, I attended the first meeting of the Judicial Committee, I had not read Mr. Gorham's published account of his examination by the Bishop of Exeter; nor was I aware of the extreme opinions which he avowed. I went into the inquiry with the expectation of finding that he had not transgressed the bounds of that latitude which has been allowed, or tolerated, ever since the Reformation. Had such proved to be the case, I could have acquiesced in a judgment which, while it recognised that latitude,

should have distinctly asserted the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, in the proper sense of the words, to be the doctrine of our Church. But having read with great attention Mr. Gorham's publication, I found that it contained assertions wholly irreconcilable, as it appears to me, with the plain teaching of the Church of England, and of the Church universal in all ages."

The Judicial Committee, he says, had represented Mr. Gorham's doctrine to be, that regeneration was not necessarily, nor unconditionally, the accompaniment of Baptism.

"Had this been a full and accurate account of Mr. Gorham's opinions on the subject of Baptism, as set forth by himself, and had the reasoning, by which the judgment of the Judicial Committee is supported, been omitted, in part at least, I might have felt less difficulty in assenting to the judgment.

....But Mr. Gorham's assertions are not fully nor adequately represented by the foregoing statement. His real errors, as I consider them to be, are of a more serious nature; being, as far as I can understand his language, not merely of *doubtful* tendency with reference to the Church's doctrine, but precisely and dogmatically *opposed* to that doctrine. These errors are passed over in silence by the Judicial Committee in their elaborate report to the Queen; a silence which is in one point of view satisfactory, inasmuch as, if it does not expressly *condemn* the errors in question, it certainly does not expressly *vindicate*, nor in terms *sanction* them.

Mr. Gorham advances positions from which it follows, as a necessary inference, not only that there *may be* cases in which infants are not regenerated in and by Baptism, but that they are *in no case* so regenerated; that infants, duly baptized, *may be* regenerated; but that if they are,



it is *before* Baptism, by an act of prevenient grace; and that so they come to Baptism already regenerated.

It did not appear to me possible to reconcile such statements as these with the plain and unequivocal teaching of the Church of England as to the nature of a Sacrament. They seemed to me to be a plain denial of that which the Church asserts, that an infant is made *in* and *by* Baptism (not *before* nor *after* it) a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven. If there be any meaning in words, these statements are an express contradiction of the truth, that in a Sacrament the outward and visible part, or sign, is a means *whereby* we receive the inward and spiritual grace, as well as a pledge to assure us thereof. If this theory of Mr. Gorham's be true, then is Baptism no longer a Sacrament according to the Church's definition, nor can we, with a safe conscience, continue to teach our children that Catechism which yet the Church declares is to be learned of every one of her members."

Bishop Blomfield's refusal to concur in this judgment was regarded with satisfaction and thankfulness by those whose approval he most valued. "For my own part," wrote Joshua Watson, "I am almost ready to say that I accept the Bishop of London's refusal to concur in the decree as a set-off against the whole sentence. It will do as much good, *à mon avis*, at least, as the judgment can do harm."<sup>1</sup>

From Mr. Gladstone he received the following letter of thanks, on the day on which the judgment was delivered:—

"MY DEAR LORD BISHOP,—It is, I trust, not wholly improper that a layman should write to thank his

<sup>1</sup> Life, by Archdeacon Churton, vol. ii. p. 279.

bishop ; and I must be early in offering thanks to your Lordship from the bottom of my heart, for the act you are to-day announced as having done on behalf of the Church of England,—not the last, I trust, and surely not the least, but the greatest in a line of services as long and as bright as adorns the name of any of the prelates of modern times ; an act of faith and courage, and of fatherly protection to weaker men, for which your name will, I trust, be blessed to the latest generations.”

But his non-concurrence was not enough to allay the agitation which the judgment itself occasioned ; especially when it became known that, had Mr. Gorham’s heterodoxy been less decided, the Bishop might possibly have acquiesced in the sentence. The Bishop of Exeter’s famous pamphlet, in which he formally excommunicated the Primate for the part he had taken, and of which four editions were sold in a single day, added fuel to the flame already raging. Petitions and protests, addressed some to the Queen, some to the Archbishop, some to the whole Bench, others to individual Bishops, continued to pour in from single clergymen, rural deaneries, and dioceses ; and an agitation was set on foot for a monster meeting of clergy and laity, which in fact took place some four or five months after the judgment, and filled St. Martin’s Hall and the neighbouring Freemasons’ Tavern with a crowd of excited Churchmen. Some, whose allegiance to their own Church had long been wavering, found in the judgment an excuse for breaking off that allegiance altogether ; and with many professions of sorrow, began to desert a communion which, as they declared, had ceased to

bear testimony to the truth. Such spirits as these the Bishop did his best to calm and to satisfy. He pointed out that though the judgment declared that for a clergyman to impugn the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration was not a legal impediment to his holding a living, yet it could not alter or touch a syllable of the Church's formularies, in which that doctrine would continue to be asserted as emphatically as ever. He said, (and the words may be thought to have an application to other forms of "strange doctrine" than that of which they were written,) "As long as we retain unaltered our Book of Common Prayer, I do not think that we have much to fear from the diversity of opinions which may from time to time arise in the Church. A clergyman may sometimes preach strange doctrines to his people; but he must also formally contradict them as often as he reads the Liturgy in his church. . . . I am much inclined to agree with the late Mr. Alexander Knox, who, as we learn from Bishop Jebb, 'considered the Liturgy a much stronger fence to the Church than subscription to the Articles. The latter was a *single* act, to which a man might argue down or persuade his scruples. But no Arian who had a grain of religion or honesty could persist, week after week, in reading the creeds.'"

For these reasons the Bishop did not think that any *synodical* action of the Church on the Gorham judgment would have been necessary, even had it been possible.

But, above all, he urged upon those who were wavering in their faith, that this decision could be no valid excuse for any son of the Church of England leaving her communion for that of Rome; and if this were a *pretext*, he

did not believe that it was with any the real *cause* of secession. He wrote to one who not long afterwards himself seceded :—

“It is perfectly surprising to me, that any persons should persuade themselves that the recent judgment furnishes a just ground for their quitting the Church of their baptism. Such a ground would not have been considered by our forefathers to warrant a separation from the Church of Rome. To leave a Church which is defective, it may be, in discipline, for one which is notoriously heretical in doctrine, is a strange and indefensible inconsistency.”

Similar was the language employed by the Bishop in a published letter, addressed to Mr. Beresford Hope :—

“You stated to me how greatly you were distressed at the recent judgment of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in Mr. Gorham’s case ; and you expressed your apprehension that some excellent men might be driven, by that decision, to quit, if not the communion of our Church, yet the offices which they held in it.

I remarked, in answer to your statement, that I could readily understand the uneasiness which you, in common with many others, felt at the position in which the Church appeared to be placed by that judgment ; but that I thought it to be your plain and unmistakeable duty not to desert the Church at such a moment, when she was most in need of your support and assistance ; but to remain firm in your allegiance to her, and to use your best endeavours to remove existing anomalies and defects. This appears to me very clearly to be the line of conduct which you ought to pursue.

If a vessel in which you were embarked should spring a leak, you would surely do your best to stop the leak.

before you thought of abandoning the ship, and leaving it to the mercy of the winds and waves.

I would desire you to consider in what respect the recent judgment has so altered the character of our Church, as to justify any of her members in severing their connexion with her. That judgment may be erroneous—may be a wrong interpretation of the Church's mind; but it is the interpretation adopted by a few fallible men, not by any body authorized by the Church to settle any point of doctrine; nor can it have the effect of changing any of the Church's doctrines. That of Baptismal Regeneration stands in her Articles and Liturgy, as it did before. *That* is not denied, nor even questioned by the judgment, the purport of which is, that to those who admit the Church's doctrine of baptismal grace, a greater latitude of explanation is permitted than you or I think right.

But this, after all, is only the opinion of a court of law, not the decision of the Church itself in convocation.

I hold, that until the Church's Articles and Formularies are altered by the authority of Convocation, or of some Synod, equivalent to Convocation, her character as a teacher of truth remains unchanged; and that nothing short of a formal act of the Church itself repudiating what it has hitherto asserted as truth, can warrant a man in quitting her communion."

To an address from lay members of the Church, signed among others by Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Roundell Palmer, and Lord Redesdale, and requesting him to take measures with his brother bishops for an authoritative declaration of the Church's real doctrine with regard to Baptism, he replied, in general terms, that he would do all in his power to avert the injurious conse-

quences which were apprehended as likely to follow from the judgment.

There were, in fact, two definite plans which the Bishop now had in view, as methods of calming the agitation of the Church for the present, and preventing the recurrence of it for the future. The first was suggested in the address just referred to—a declaration on the part of the bishops, reasserting, as the recognised doctrine of the Church of England, the remission of sins in Baptism, which the judgment was thought to have impugned. But as both the archbishops, and most of the bishops, considered that the time was unsuitable for such a declaration, he was soon obliged to abandon the idea as impracticable.

The other plan, which in the end was equally unsuccessful, was nothing less than the establishment of a new Court of Appeal in matters of doctrine, of such a kind as would be likely to be more respected by Churchmen than the anomalous Committee of Council, and would remove what was called at the time “the public scandal of having matters concerning the doctrine or discipline of the Church decided by persons who are not only not its members, but its enemies.” Many Churchmen, whose opinion the Bishop respected, were urgent for some alteration in this respect. Mr. Beresford Hope was for giving greater authority in cases of heresy to the bishops; and so was Mr. Gladstone, who expressed his views in a pamphlet, addressed to Bishop Blomfield.

The Bishop writes thus to the Archbishop of Canterbury soon after the Gorham judgment:—

“LONDON HOUSE, *March 14, 1850.*

“....I am sorry to find that the feeling which has been excited by the judgment in Gorham’s case, is much

stronger and more widely spread than I had supposed it would be; and that a very numerous and influential body of men, laity as well as clergy, seriously meditate an attempt to set up a Free Episcopal Church. I have addressed a strong remonstrance to some of the leading men amongst them, and have urged upon them the necessity of directing their efforts to the practical improvement of obtaining a differently constituted Court of Appeal. I have reason to believe, from what Mr. Gladstone and others tell me, that if such a Court as I have suggested (which I will presently describe) were established, all, or nearly all, would be satisfied, and the present feverish agitation would subside."

He proceeds to show that the Upper House of Convocation was a Court of Appeal, established by unrepealed statutes of Henry VIII., in cases of marriage, divorce, and the like; and to this Court he proposed to transfer the final appeal in matters of doctrine.

"But in order to supply this tribunal with such legal knowledge as might be wanted for the discharge of its duties, in conformity with the law of the land, it might have power given it to summon the Judges, or retired Judges, of the Ecclesiastical, Common Law and Equity Courts, or any of them, to hear cases, and to give their opinions, in the same manner as the House of Lords summons the Common Law Judges; or the Queen might add to the Court such Judges, being members of the Church of England, as she might think proper.

Such a Court of Appeal would have the great advantage of being only a *revival* of one which is not legally extinct, though dormant; and it would, I verily believe, be almost universally acceptable. I *know* that it would satisfy nearly all those who are now most inclined to fly off from us; and would do more towards

restoring peace and harmony than almost any other measure that could be adopted. The plan of retaining the present Court of Appeal, with the addition of those Bishops who are of the Privy Council, would be wholly useless and unsatisfactory.

I wish your Grace would confer with Lord John Russell on the subject. I look upon the matter as one of vital importance."

The Bishop's proposal, however, found no favour with Lord John Russell. He considered that if doctrinal questions were decided by the Upper House of Convocation, "beneficed clergymen would be driven from their livings, and pious laymen from the Church, by the dogmatic decrees of a dominant Hierarchy." He feared also that the proposed change, by throwing new powers into the hands of the bishops, would "alienate the affections of the great majority of the laity of the Church of England; totally alter the Protestant character of that Church, and in the end substitute the supremacy of the Pope for that of the Queen:" for it is a singular article of the Whig creed on Church matters, that the more reasons a clergyman has, from the nature of his preferment, for wishing things to remain as they are, the more he is likely to be insidiously agitating for their subversion. Bishop Blomfield was not the only modern Bishop who has been branded as a Jesuit in disguise.

The Bishop, however, persevered in his endeavours to carry through the House of Lords the measure for transferring appeals in matters of doctrine to the Episcopal Bench. He had already, as far back as 1847, brought forward a Bill upon the subject, which, amended by



a Select Committee, was again introduced in 1848 and 1849; but, owing to various causes of delay, was suffered to remain in suspense. Again, in February, 1850, a Bill was read a first time, containing a clause which provided for the erection of a Court of Appeal, consisting of the two archbishops, three senior bishops, four divinity professors, the Lord Chancellor, and two ecclesiastical lawyers. But, on consultation with his brother bishops, whom the Primate, at his request, summoned together for the purpose, Bishop Blomfield came to the determination to introduce a fresh Bill, having for its single object the transference of the powers of the Committee of Council to the Upper House of Convocation. On moving the second reading of this Bill, June 3d, 1850, he addressed the House of Lords at more than usual length:—

“I rise,” he said, “under an almost overwhelming sense of the difficulty of the task which I have undertaken, and of my own inability to perform it, in a manner at all adequate to its importance—its importance, my Lords, with reference to the consequences which are likely to follow for your Lordships’ reception or rejection of the measure. My Lords, I am not apt to indulge overstrained or extravagant feelings of hope or fear, nor am I accustomed to employ exaggerated language in expressing them; but I do assure your Lordships, in the words of truth and soberness, that I believe it to be impossible to overrate the momentous consequence of the issues which hang upon that alternative. I will not now describe them more particularly. It is enough to say that they involve, not only the peace, but the integrity, of the Church of this empire. . . . But, my Lords, I feel, at the same time, that just measure

of confidence, which ought to be inspired by a settled conviction, that the cause which I have undertaken to plead, is substantially the cause of justice and truth; and that, whatever may be the measure of success which will now attend it, it is a cause which must ultimately prevail. We contend, my Lords, for a great fundamental principle. We may, possibly, suffer a disappointment; but we shall not be disheartened. We may be perplexed, but not in despair."

After declaring that the feeling for the necessity of some change in the matter of doctrinal appeals had not been first excited by the Gorham judgment, but had existed long before it, he proceeded to show, as in his letter to the Archbishop, that the Upper House of Convocation was a Court already existing, and which needed only to be revived. He next stated his objections to the existing tribunal.

"My objection," he said, "is rather to the principle on which that Court is constituted, than to the mode in which its members discharge their judicial functions. I am bound to say that, as far as my own observation extends, and judging from the reports of others, there can hardly be a more satisfactory tribunal of ultimate appeal, in all cases but those which involve a question of purely spiritual discipline, than the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council as at present constituted. In all matters requiring judicial acuteness and calmness, impartiality and firmness, for the discovery of the truth of facts, and for the explanation and application of the law, nothing more is to be desired. It is only when questions of doctrine arise, and points of faith are to be determined that I object to that tribunal as incompetent."

After saying that permission to the Church to deal *synodically* with questions of heresy or false doctrine, was a thing which he had for the present moment no hope of obtaining, and having reminded the House that the Church of England "is the only Church in Christendom which is deprived of the privilege of synodical deliberation," he proceeds to state his reason for thinking the Judicial Committee not altogether a competent tribunal for the determination of doctrinal questions.

"In the first place, the Judges are exclusively laymen, some of whom are not qualified by their previous studies and habits of mind to deal with purely spiritual questions. Secondly, some of them, possibly a majority, may not only not be members of the Church of England, but may entertain opinions diametrically opposite to the Church's doctrine. Putting aside for the present the question whether the Judicial Committee can be considered as properly a Church tribunal, I proceed to speak of its incompetency. . . . I object to that tribunal on the ground that its members are not competent judges of such spiritual questions as are likely to be submitted to their decision. I am aware, it may be said, that every educated member of the Church must be considered to have a competent knowledge of its doctrines. . . . But there are many grave and difficult questions in divinity, depending upon a right construction of the Articles, which scarcely ever engage the attention of the laity; especially of those whose profession necessarily turns their minds to other subjects. I can easily imagine a case of this sort brought before lay judges, altogether new to them, and scarcely to be understood without previous study and thought, which, to persons conversant with such matters, are the mere

alphabet of theology. Is it likely that they will be able to decide satisfactorily such a question, involving, perhaps, in its consequences the peace and unity of the Church, when all their previous studies have been in an entirely different direction, and when their minds have not been prepared by the habitual consideration of such matters, to take an exact and comprehensive view of the case before them in all its bearings?"

After tracing the history of appeals in spiritual cases, through the history of English law, up to the practice of the early Church, and urging the analogy of the courts of law, which take the opinion of competent persons in matters out of their own province, on the principle that *cuique in sua arte credendum est*, the Bishop proceeded to meet the various objections which had already been raised against the bill, and concluded with the following words:—

"My Lords, I would not be understood to rest my case entirely upon the probabilities of superior fitness in point of theological learning, I rest it also, and in the first place, on the inherent and indefeasible right of the Church to teach and maintain the truth by means of her spiritual pastors and rulers; a right inherent in her original constitution, and expressly granted to her by her Divine Head, in the terms of the Apostolical commission. On this point I will say no more. It will probably be dwelt upon by some of those who will follow me in the debate; but I cannot conclude, without protesting against an inference which may possibly be drawn from the fact of my having laid so much stress upon Acts of Parliament, and ancient practice, and upon the question of comparative competency and fitness of judges, that I think lightly of what is in truth the fundamental and vital principle involved in

this subject ; namely, the inherent and inalienable right of the bishops of the Church of England to be the judges of questions of its doctrine, duly submitted to them.

I now commend this measure to your Lordships' calm and serious consideration. I am myself almost overpowered by a contemplation of the results which are likely to follow from its rejection. I commit it to your Lordships' judgment, not without anxiety and apprehension ; but, at the same time, not without hope. Looking to its extreme gravity and importance, your Lordships will not be surprised if I conclude, with somewhat more than ordinary solemnity, by the devout and earnest wish, that He who has committed to his Church the sacred deposit of his truth, may guide you to a right conclusion."

This speech was one of the most successful of Bishop Blomfield's parliamentary efforts. "The Bishop spoke with more than his usual lucidity and force. His clear, grave tones, interrupted for several moments towards the close by strong emotion, conveyed his speech to every part of the House. . . . The gorgeous chamber, rich with mediæval ornament, became for once a not inappropriate receptacle for the crowd of scheming politicians and titled country gentlemen who lounge upon its crimson benches, and assisted the imagination, as well as the heart, to kindle at those faint gleams of living fire which burned in the English Church in elder times."<sup>1</sup> He was supported by Lord Stanley with his characteristic energy, and by Lord Redesdale, who declared that in matters of doctrine "too great liberty to the clergy is injury to the laity." But the opposition of the Government was too strong for him, and the bill was thrown out by 84 to 51.

<sup>1</sup> *Guardian* Newspaper, June 5, 1850.

It is obvious to remark that the disastrous consequences which the Bishop anticipated as likely to follow upon the rejection of his bill, have not, in fact, ensued. It may, however, at least be doubted whether the present position of the Church, with regard to cases of heresy, can be considered satisfactory by her faithful members.

Meanwhile, the struggles of theological warfare, and the agitations of the Church, were, for a moment, interrupted in the life of Bishop Blomfield by an incident of unmingled pleasure. He had long intended to build and endow, at his own expense, some one church in his diocese. The neighbourhood of Shepherd's Bush, not far from his own palace at Fulham, where a considerable population had grown up on the outskirts of the large parish of Hammersmith (which itself had once formed a part of Fulham), was the spot which he eventually chose for this purpose. Being lord of the manor, he was enabled to grant part of the site for the church, schools, and parsonage, the rest being given by a local landowner. The building cost him between £7,000 and £8,000, and an endowment of £150 a year was provided out of the revenues of the see, the Ecclesiastical Commission adding £40 out of the sinecure rectory of Fulham and Hammersmith. The organ, stained-glass windows, and other decorations, were offered by the friends and family of the Bishop, and by persons residing on the spot; two windows being given by a number of the Essex clergy, as a mark of respect and affection for their former Diocesan, and the font by the churchwardens of Holy Trinity, Finchley, in testimony of their gratitude for the great assistance rendered to that district by the Bishop; and the church, which was a good specimen of the revival

of ecclesiastical architecture, was consecrated April 11th, 1850; an excellent sermon being preached on the occasion by the Bishop's chaplain, the Rev. W. G. Humphry. The event is thus recorded by one of the most respected organs of the Church<sup>1</sup> :—

“In the midst of the eager struggles for Christian truth and the confused strife of tongues now raging around us, it is a real consolation to be able to turn, for a few moments, to a visible sign of the catholic life of the English Church, to a labour of love, freely undertaken in her and for her, and consummated, during these days of confusion, by a prelate who refused his concurrence to that judgment which is spreading grief and anxiety amongst us. Such a spectacle was the consecration, on April 11th, of the church of St. Stephen, built at the expense of the Bishop of London, at Shepherd's Bush. At all times a bishop himself building a church is a thing to make Churchmen rejoice, still more so when the Church embodies in so prominent a manner those principles of ecclesiastical order and architectural truth which the Church of England has so extraordinarily recovered of late years.”

The Bishop himself thus records the consecration in his diary :—

“I was this day permitted, by the goodness of God, to consecrate the church which I have built and endowed at Shepherd's Bush, humbly beseeching Him graciously to accept the offering for the sake of Jesus Christ. My dear wife and children (except my dear son Henry, who is at Malta), my brothers, with their families, &c., were present, with many of the clergy of Essex, both of my late and present dioceses, who offered two stained-glass

<sup>1</sup> *Guardian Newspaper*, April 17, 1850.

windows and a silver-gilt alms-dish. About eighty-six came to luncheon at London House."

The parsonage-house at Shepherd's Bush was also built by Bishop Blomfield ; the schools were added by the incumbent and parishioners.



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which he preached at this consecration, and which is said to have had the effect of preventing some who heard it, for the time at least, from seceding to the Church of Rome, shows that he felt that the occasion was no ordinary one. The subject of the sermon is, "the nature of the Church, and the duties of its members." After speaking of the notes which distinguish a true branch of the Catholic Church, he argues that no man, who has grounds for believing his own Church to be such a branch, is justified in deserting it for any mere faultiness of discipline:—

"Still less," he continues (with evident allusion to the recent Gorham judgment), "is such a renunciation to be justified, on the ground that any authority, short of the authority of the Church itself, has pronounced any opinion, or done any act, which may seem to cast a shade over the brightness of her teaching, while that teaching, in its acknowledged and authoritative institutes, remains unchanged. With regard to our own Church, let us be thankful that her light still shines in all its strength and purity in her Confessions and Liturgical Offices; that every one who ministers at her altars must of necessity hold up that light to the faithful as the very light of truth; and that it still burns on the candlestick of pure gold in the midst of the sanctuary, to give '*light unto all that are in the house.*' Shall we, my brethren, while the Church itself continues to speak with authority the same unvarying language, and to hold fast, as a Church, the form of sound words; and while we ourselves are left at full liberty to interpret her mind according to what we believe to be the scale of truth; shall we, if some think themselves set free to put a different sense upon her teaching in some one of its features, and to maintain

what we may deem to be erroneous ; shall we, on that account, renounce her authority, and throw ourselves into the arms of a Church, which, if it would bind down its members more stringently to the canon of truth in one direction, will bind us down with equal stringency to the maintenance and propagation of deadly heresies in another ? Shall we, in order to avoid laxity and coldness, rush into idolatry ?

O my brethren, let us not abuse the goodness of God by slighting and casting from us the great spiritual privileges we enjoy as members of a true branch of Christ's holy Catholic Church, whose defects (for what branch of that Church is free from defects ?) are those of discipline rather than of doctrine ; but let us rather avail ourselves all the more earnestly of our own undisputed right to teach and preach the whole of that truth which is the Church's sacred deposit, and use our best endeavours to remove the blemishes and repair the flaws which may seem to disfigure, or weaken, the shrine which contains it."

Further on, after speaking of some of the signs of life and energy which the Church of England had lately been giving, he adds :—

"For my own part, I cannot doubt, but that the great Spirit of evil, the Prince of the power of this world, who looks 'with jealous leer malign' upon the Reformed Church of England, as destined, it may be, and called upon by her singular opportunities and means, to be the evangelizer of the world, and the chosen instrument of beating down his strongholds, and carrying forward into his dominions the kingdom of the Redeemer, is using special efforts to weaken her capacities of good, and regarding with complacency those intestine divisions, which prey upon her vitals, and tend to paralyse her powers of action."

The church itself was a noble monument of the zeal of the incumbent of the mother Church, Mr. Bennett, and of the munificent spirit which he had excited among his friends and parishioners ; and at an entertainment after the consecration, the Bishop, as he was often reminded afterwards, spoke in eulogistic terms, both of Mr. Bennett himself, and of the work which he had accomplished, in founding a church, with its schools and other machinery, in a district formerly but little cared for, and containing a large population of poor. On previous occasions, before the foundation of St. Barnabas, the Bishop had remonstrated with Mr. Bennett on certain practices introduced into the services at St. Paul's, which he considered objectionable, as approaching too nearly to the ritual of Rome. But a month had not elapsed from the consecration of St. Barnabas, when the Bishop was informed that many more novelties were introduced into the services of the new church, than had been attempted in those of the old.

"I am informed," he wrote, "on authority which I can hardly doubt, that in the services at St. Barnabas you are introducing still further deviations from the ordinary forms of our Church, and that practices are adopted and encouraged *there* which have not *yet* found their way into St. Paul's ; and which give just offence even to those who have hitherto gone with you in your observances." And he proceeds to specify the particular practices alluded to.

The upshot of a voluminous correspondence was, that on some of the points to which the Bishop's remonstrance referred, Mr. Bennett signified his intention of complying with the wishes of his Diocesan ; others he showed to

have been incorrectly reported ; while some he declared his intention of maintaining, on the principle that in the English Church, "wheresoever no prohibition occurs, there the ancient usages of the Catholic Church were considered to prevail:" avowing, at the same time, his further intention "gradually to advocate and introduce, regardless of Puritanical objections, such pious and Catholic customs," as the use of the crucifix, and of peculiar vestments at the Holy Communion. In a subsequent letter, he declared that he would take three standards to guide him in the ritual of St. Barnabas ; 1st, whatever was practised in any other churches in the diocese, and as yet undetected by the Bishop ; 2nd, whatever had been done in the Bishop's presence at the consecration of the church ; and 3rd, whatever he could find practised in any of the English Cathedrals.

To such rules of ritual observance the Bishop, of course, was not likely to give his assent ; and finding no other way of ending a controversy, the protracting of which only increased the agitation, he at length accepted an offer made more than once by Mr. Bennett, of resigning his living.

The Bishop's conduct, though, of course, differently viewed by the opposing parties of the Church, might have excited but little attention, and the whole affair might have passed off without much noise, had it not been that other causes rendered the case of St. Barnabas conspicuous. For this was the time selected by the Pope, then lately restored to the Vatican by French interposition, for promulgating the famous Bull, in which he parcelled out England into dioceses, regardless of those already existing, placing at the head of the new

Hierarchy as Archbishop of Westminster, Dr. Wiseman, on whom he had recently bestowed a Cardinal's hat.

It is difficult, twelve years afterwards, to recall or realize the excitement created in England by this "papal aggression," as it was called. The great public meetings, protests, and demonstrations; the memorials to the Queen from clergy and laity; the violent articles in the public press; the famous "Durham letter" of Lord John Russell, and the abortive "Ecclesiastical Titles Bill," which was the only fruit of that statesman's share in the general excitement: these things are passed away as though they had never been, and, perhaps, almost provoke a smile when we look back upon them, and remember that, in the leading journal of the day, this impotent act of the Pope was called, "The first act of the great drama, in unravelling the plot of which is involved nothing less than the fate of the future ecclesiastical polity of these kingdoms."<sup>1</sup> Lord Aberdeen, almost alone among public men, appears to have had the discernment to perceive the groundlessness of the general alarm, and the harmless nature of the Papal Bull, and to have had also the courage to express his opinion.

Bishop Blomfield himself shared in the alarm created by the Bull, and was ready on occasion to express his opinion. He took an early opportunity of consulting with the archdeacon and clergy of Middlesex as to the steps which should be taken on the occasion; and he received from them an address to which between 300 and 400 signatures were attached. In this address, after expressing their gratitude to the Bishop for the

<sup>1</sup> *Times Newspaper*, Dec. 11, 1850.

attitude which he had assumed in meeting the aggression of the Pope, the clergy proceeded to enumerate the various services which Bishop Blomfield had rendered to the Diocese, and to the Church at large; dwelling especially on his "long-continued and unprecedented exertions to relieve, by the erection of churches, chapels, and school-rooms, the appalling spiritual destitution of the metropolis and its suburbs," and on his "unremitting devotedness to the functions of his arduous office, from which," they observe, "the most diligent of us has still much to learn, and which, during an episcopate of twenty-two years in this diocese, the grace of God has enabled you, in times of more than ordinary difficulty, to maintain."

It was cheering to the Bishop, in a time of so much trial, to find that the occasion of the papal aggression had evoked such an expression of confidence from so large a body of his clergy.

In answer to another address from the clergy of Westminster, he said:—

"The recent assumption of authority by the Bishop of Rome, in pretending to parcel out this country into new dioceses, and to appoint archbishops and bishops to preside over them, without the consent of the Sovereign, is a schismatical act, without precedent, and one which would not be tolerated by the Government of any Roman Catholic kingdom. I trust that it will not be quietly submitted to by our own. . . . The appointment of bishops to preside over new dioceses in England, constituted by a papal brief, is virtually a denial of the legitimate authority of the British Sovereign and of the English Episcopate; a denial also of the validity of our orders, and an assertion of spiritual jurisdiction over

the whole Christian people of this realm. .... There can be little doubt that it is intended as an insult to the Sovereign and Church of this country."

Thus being for a time on the popular side, the Bishop received the praises of the press for his firm and dignified attitude, and maintenance of Protestant principles. But the "papal aggression" agitation soon began to drift away from its original object, and to assume a form which aggravated the difficulties and embarrassments of Bishop Blomfield. The new turn was first given to the popular feeling by Lord John Russell, in his Letter to the Bishop of Durham, which contained the following passage :—

"There is a danger, however, which alarms me much more than any aggression of a foreign sovereign. Clergymen of our own Church, who have subscribed the Thirty-nine Articles, and acknowledged in explicit terms the Queen's supremacy, have been the most forward in leading their flocks, 'step by step, to the very verge of the precipice.' The honour paid to saints, the claim of infallibility for the Church, the superstitious use of the sign of the Cross, the muttering of the Liturgy, so as to disguise the language in which it was written, the recommendation of auricular confession, and the administration of penance and absolution—all these things are pointed out by clergymen of the Church of England as worthy of adoption, and are now openly reprehended by the Bishop of London in his Charge to the clergy of his diocese.

What, then, is the danger to be apprehended from a foreign prince of no great power, compared to the danger within the gates from the unworthy sons of the Church of England herself?



I have little hope that the propounders and framers of these innovations will desist from their insidious course. But I rely with confidence on the people of England, and I will not bate a jot of heart or hope so long as the glorious principles and the immortal martyrs of the Reformation shall be held in reverence by a nation which looks with contempt on the mummeries of superstition, and with scorn at the laborious endeavours which are now making to confine the intellect and enslave the soul."

In this document, the words "step by step, to the very verge of the precipice," were a quotation from Bishop Blomfield's recently delivered Charge; and the representation given of the contents of that Charge was partially true: for though the Bishop had reprehended, not "the honour paid to saints," but the doctrine of the *mediation* of the saints, and had made no allusion to "muttering the Liturgy," he had spoken in very strong terms of some of the other practices adverted to by Lord John.

"These innovations," he had said, "have, in some instances, been carried to such a length as to render the Church-service almost *histrionic*. I really cannot characterize by any gentler term the continual changes of postures, the frequent genuflexions, the crossings, the peculiarities of dress, and some of the decorations of churches, to which I allude. They are, after all, a poor imitation of the Roman ceremonial, and furnish, I have no doubt, to the observant members of that Church, a subject, on the one hand, of ridicule, as being a faint and meagre copy of their own gaudy ritual; and, on the other hand, of exultation, as preparing those who take delight in them to seek a further gratification of their tastes in the Roman Communion."

And after quoting his opinion on these points, as already expressed on several occasions, the Bishop added:—

“I had hoped that these distinct expressions of my opinions would have the effect of checking the innovations alluded to, and of awakening those of the clergy of my diocese who had departed the furthest from the simplicity of our reformed ritual, to a sense of the danger of all endeavours to assimilate it to the Roman ceremonial, and to the inconsistency of such endeavours with their own obligations as ministers of our Reformed Church, bound by solemn pledges to observe her rules, and to carry out her intentions. That expectation has been disappointed: neither my public exhortations, nor my private admonitions, have produced the desired effect. I have been told that I had no authority to forbid anything which was not in express terms forbidden by law; and that practices which, though purposely laid aside by the Church, and so by implication condemned, have not been actually prohibited, are therefore lawful; and that canonical obedience to a bishop is only that which he can enforce in a court of law; and so the innovations which I objected to have been persisted in, with additional changes from time to time, with the manifest purpose of assimilating the services of our Reformed Church as nearly as possible to those of the Roman. Once more I declare my entire disapproval of such practices, and my earnest wish that, while every direction of the rubric and canons is observed where it is possible, no form should be introduced into the celebration of public worship which is not expressly prescribed by them, or sanctioned by long-established usage.”

It is probable that even had the Bishop foreseen the use which would be made of these expressions, he would

still have felt it his duty to give utterance to them. But the turn which matters were now about to take doubly embarrassed his position. The words of Lord John Russell were speedily applied to the case of St. Barnabas ; and then began a series of disturbances at that unfortunate church, which have been only surpassed since by the disgraceful proceedings at St. George's East. The Protestant cause was taken up, as in the later case, by those to whom all religions were equally indifferent, and all excuses for a riot equally acceptable ; and every Sunday saw the church doors besieged by a mob of disorderly supporters of the Reformation, and the services interrupted by their groans or hisses. The public press urged on the mob by invectives against all who symbolized with Mr. Bennett. "We trust," said the *Times*, "that we see in the expressions of Lord John Russell signs of a purpose, not yet perhaps fully matured, but rapidly growing towards completion—the purpose of cleansing our Church from the discredit cast upon her quite as much by the treachery as by the schism of her members—the purpose of rendering our Universities something better than schools of popery and mysticism—the purpose of restoring to us our Church such as the Reformation gave it to us, the child of light and reason, unclouded by superstition, undegraded by priestcraft, clear and comprehensive in her doctrines, built upon truth, and abhorring falsehood." "The Rubric must be altered," chimed in the *Morning Herald* ; "if the Church is to be restored to its integrity, the fragments of Romanism which the compromise of the Reformation left in our Liturgy—those spots for the growth of poisonous plants—must be removed."

Mr. Bennett, finding himself under the pressure of a mob, was less disposed to accede to the Bishop's wishes than ever; the rioters continued to shout and groan, the *Times* thundered, the Bishop remonstrated, and so things stood at the time when, as we have already seen, he called upon Mr. Bennett to redeem his pledge of resignation. The resignation was not finally made till March, 1851, but it was determined on in December, 1850. The immediate consequences were that certain changes were at once made in the ritual of St. Barnabas, and that Mr. Bennett retired for a while from the scene. But to the Bishop, at least, no peace ensued. He was beset from all quarters. On one side he was thanked by a host of anonymous correspondents, and by others whose names generally added no weight to their communications, for having gained, in the retirement of Mr. Bennett, the *spolia opima* of the Protestant cause; on the other hand, deputations of the churchwardens and parishioners of St. Paul's represented to him in voluminous documents the loss which they would sustain by the departure of their incumbent; while others openly reproached him for deserting the cause of the Church, and "began to think that it might be nothing but God's especial Providence which had brought new Bishops from Rome a second time, to supersede the offices of the cowardly guardians of a failing Church." The *Guardian*, generally considered as the organ of High Churchmen, though deprecating the retirement of Mr. Bennett, admitted that "his claim to regulate the ritual of his Church as he pleased, in matters on which the law is silent, without sanction and even in defiance of his Bishop, is altogether unprecedented and

untenable;" while the *Morning Chronicle* contained a series of letters, signed "D. C. L.," and known to proceed from the pen of a zealous and munificent layman, which condemned the Bishop's conduct in strong terms. About the same time three Evangelical clergymen of the diocese insinuated to the Bishop that he had recently let fall some expressions which might be construed to imply an approval of the practice of Auricular Confession; and they drew from him a reply at some length, explaining his real views on the question.

The anxiety produced by these various causes of annoyance began now to tell upon the Bishop's health. There was nothing in the whole course of his Episcopate which made him feel more acutely the responsibility of his office, or caused him greater distress of mind; and this more on account of other persons involved in the controversy, and of the mischief done to the cause of religion, than from personal considerations. For the first time he records the close of the old and the beginning of the new year with words of almost unmixed despondency in his private diary:—

"1850, *Dec.* 31.—The year ends in troubles.

"1851, *Jan.* 1.—The beginning of the new year is dark and threatening. May God avert the evils which seem to be coming upon us, and give me wisdom and strength to rule his Church prudently."

Soon afterwards he described himself to a correspondent as "perplexed and harassed beyond description." He lost the cheerfulness which, except when suffering from actual illness, he had hitherto shown unimpaired in his family circle, and became silent and

depressed. In Parliament, Sir Benjamin Hall, the member for Marylebone, now Lord Llanover, took advantage of the Bishop's unpopularity with the ultra-Protestants to accuse him of falsifying the returns of the income arising from the estates of the see at Paddington, and thus of representing himself as a poorer man than he really was ; and it was with a very ill grace that Sir Benjamin was compelled to retract this unfounded accusation.

Eventually, as has been said, Mr. Bennett actually resigned the incumbency of St. Paul's, and the excitement of which he had been the centre gradually died away, when its chief cause was removed from the scene. But these troubles left their mark on Bishop Blomfield. He never, to the end of his days, recovered his former spirits after this trial. He considered himself to have been, throughout, unfairly dealt with ; but this he could have borne more easily. It was the great scandal to the Church which he deplored, and which made this a time of unceasing anxiety to him night and day. That he had acted on the whole for the best, he never for a moment doubted. It was not likely, however, that his course should meet with favour from extreme persons on either side, and both at the time, and since, he was accused by the one party of too much tolerance, and by the other of injustice. It has been said that if, in the first instance, he had made a more decided stand against the ritualistic party, its influence and growth would have been at once checked, and a dangerous movement stopped before it had time to gather strength. But those who have thus accused him know but little of the responsibilities of a Christian bishop, or the thoughtful con-

sideration for others which animated Bishop Blomfield. Those who were in his confidence knew that his forbearance arose not from timidity, but from a tender regard for the spiritual welfare of those who were desirous of satisfying their ritualistic cravings without leaving the Church of their fathers. There can be no doubt that had he acted in the way to which the clamour of the Puritan party urged him, the effect would have been to drive into the Church of Rome a large number of persons who, by the Bishop's forbearance, had time to reconsider their position, and remain, with a safe conscience, in the Church of England. It has already been remarked that the sermon which he preached at the consecration of St. Barnabas, was said of itself to have kept back several persons whom the Gorham judgment had driven to the confines of Rome. In looking back at his own conduct at this time, he said :—

“ I was extremely unwilling to have recourse to any measures which should have the effect of driving from the Church of England, or from its ministry, men who had proved their devotedness to its cause by great personal sacrifices and by unwearied diligence in their sacred calling, but who were acting under a mistaken view of what their duty to the Church required or permitted them to do. . . . I shrank from the responsibility of driving them from their allotted station in the household of Christ, so long as the novelties which they practised were not manifestly traceable to the root of some false and dangerous opinion.”

He often expressed to his intimate friends his great anxiety about the probable results of severe measures towards those who were thus wavering in their allegiance

to the Church, and declared his readiness to endure obloquy, and appear temporizing, rather than precipitate a wide and dangerous schism ; for he saw symptoms of a worse danger to the Church of England than the withdrawal of many of her most influential and some of her holiest members into the communion of the Church of Rome. That danger was a schism in the Church of England itself, and the creation in this country of a Free Episcopal Church—a danger only averted by the forbearance and wisdom of the Church's rulers.

It may be objected, and it has been objected, to Bishop Blomfield, that in the case of St. Barnabas, where he *did* have recourse to a measure apparently coercive, he sacrificed a clergyman, who, whatever his opinions, had been more than ordinarily zealous and conscientious in the discharge of his duties, to the clamours of the public press and the tyranny of the mob. But it must be remembered, in the first place, that the Bishop's objections to the ritual system of St. Barnabas had been declared considerably before that church became the centre of a popular disturbance ; and, in the second place, it has been already observed that Bishop Blomfield's disposition led him to give up, if necessary, *everything except a principle*. To his mind, no principle was involved in the observance of a greater or less amount of ritual splendour ; and, therefore, in calling upon Mr. Bennett to modify the practices of his church in order to satisfy objectors, he was not desiring him to give up anything essential, in his view, to consistent Churchmanship, but only to yield in matters indifferent, that the ministry might not be blamed.

If the points for which Mr. Bennett was arraigned by



the popular voice had been any of those great principles of Anglican theology which the Bishop held in common with him, he would never have permitted, much less have desired, a zealous parish-priest to leave the scene of his labours for such causes.

But upon this whole subject it will be best to let the Bishop speak for himself. First, in writing to his friend and former curate, Mr. Harvey, he thus sums up the facts of the case of St. Barnabas :—

“ Nov. 29, 1850.

“ . . . Just before I left England I addressed a letter of strong remonstrance to Mr. Bennett, in answer to which he defended his practices, and declared that he must adhere to his principles ; and that if I would solemnly declare these principles to be inconsistent with his duty to the Church, he would resign his charge into my hands. I was at that time too ill to proceed with the matter [he had been sent, by the advice of his physicians, to try the waters of Wildbad, in the Black Forest], but immediately on my return home I again wrote to him at great length, pointing out to him the objections to his practices, in behalf of which I told him he had offered no valid defence, and adding that if I restrained him from those practices, which I felt myself bound to do as far as I could, I did not think that his conscience would be seriously aggrieved, or that a sufficient cause would arise for his leaving the ministry. This was on the 16th October. On the 30th I received an unsatisfactory answer, from which it appeared that he was still ready to resign if I insisted on a change. The business of my visitation prevented me from replying to his letter till the 16th November, when I again wrote, stating to him my decided opinion that a continuance of the practices objected to, and of any others

not sanctioned by the laws and customs of the Church, as well as any peculiarities of dress or manner which are unusual in our Church, but are copied from that of Rome, were inconsistent with his duty as a member of the English Church, and I again called upon him to relinquish them.

From the language of his former letters I fully expected that this requisition would lead to a tender of his resignation; instead of which, after some days, he wrote to me declaring his willingness to make *some* changes, which appeared to me to be quite insufficient; and accordingly I wrote to him, requiring him either to promise a willing and *ex animo* compliance with my requisition, or to resign his charge, which I said he could no longer hold without serious injury to the Church. And so the matter stands at present, as I have not yet received his answer.

You are at liberty to mention these facts to any person whom you may think it desirable to *enlighten*. I did not choose to make Mr. Bennett a *martyr* if I could avoid it."

Again a few weeks later :—

"I was prepared for the blame which was likely to be cast upon me by some persons for having accepted Mr. Bennett's offer of resigning; but I must confess my surprise at being charged with *precipitation*. More than four months elapsed between the first declaration of his readiness to retire, rather than comply with my requisitions, and my acceptance of his offer. I was sincerely desirous of avoiding that extremity; and did all that I could to bring him to a sense of his duty, which clearly was to submit to my judgment as to observances, some of which were plainly opposed to the spirit of the Church's rules, and others of doubtful legality. If I have erred in Mr. Bennett's case, it has been by too great forbearance."

A year and a half later, in a time of comparative calm, he writes thus to an English resident on the continent:—

“Our Church has been in a divided and troubled state; and I have had in consequence a good deal of anxiety, and not a little obloquy, for having endeavoured to ward off popery on the one hand, and puritanism on the other, and to keep a middle course. The storm has not yet passed away, but the waves are beginning to subside; and I feel assured that, under the Divine protection, our Church will continue to maintain the true principles of the Reformation, and to be the firmest bulwark of the Protestant religion.”

Two years later again, he thus expressed his opinion of the higher ritualistic clergymen of his diocese:—

“You ask me what I meant by ‘the rest of them’—I meant those other clergymen, who profess the greatest reverence for the authority of their bishop, and act accordingly, as long as he agrees with their views of Church order; but who, the moment he calls their proceedings in question, fly in his face, and set his directions and advice at nought. . . .

. . . . You said in your letter of last autumn, that you hoped I would not prohibit the introduction of the practice of placing lights upon the altar. I stated in answer that I could not permit it. Will any impartial person say that this was not a prohibition, though the word ‘prohibit’ was not used? What is the difference between refusing to permit, and prohibiting? I forbore from using the latter word, as thinking that the milder phrase would be equally effectual.

I do not believe that any clergyman of my diocese, besides yourself, would charge me by implication with

requiring of my clergy 'a blind and absolute obedience to the bishop : ' but where authority is clearly vested in the bishop by law, as it is in the case of all doubtful questions of interpreting the Rubric, I certainly do claim authority, and expect obedience."

Some further extracts from the Bishop's correspondence are added here, which show how the proceedings of the ritualistic party drove him, in the later years of his episcopate, rather further in the protestant direction than he was naturally inclined to go, and disposed him to narrow, rather than extend, that latitude in ritual matters which has usually been conceded in the English Church.

*To a Clergyman who complained of the dulness of the Church Service.*

"FULHAM, Jan. 2, 1851.

"I am rather startled by your designating our Church service, as it has been always or almost always conducted in our parish churches, as 'blank, dismal, oppressive, and dreary.' This I think is not the language in which a clergyman of our Church ought to express himself on such a subject; and it is wholly incorrect. If the minister *reads* with devotion and solemnity (not *intones*): if the congregation join in the responses and psalmody; and if sound doctrine and practical exhortations be earnestly and affectionately delivered by the preacher, such epithets as you have used are grievously misapplied.

The absence of the poor from our parish churches is easily accounted for, without disparaging the mode in which the services are performed, by the appropriation of the sittings to the higher and middle classes. That

music, and decoration, and excessive form will not cure that evil, appears from the case of St. Andrew's, Wells Street, a church built expressly for the poor, but occupied almost exclusively by the rich, at least during some of the services. Even where accommodation is provided for the poor, their presence or absence depends very much on the state of education amongst them, or their capacity to follow the service, and on their having decent clothing ; without which they are ashamed of appearing amongst their richer neighbours.

It is not a rich style of decoration, nor good music, still less open sittings, which are objected to, but such decorations and such music as are associated in the minds of the people with the forms of the Roman Church.

A high altar, and an enclosed chancel, and lights before the sacrament, and everything which indicates a belief in the corporal presence of our Lord, inevitably tend to an inference that it is wished to revive the great error of the Church of Rome ; and a cry of popery will be raised against the clergyman, however strongly he may protest that he means nothing of the kind, but is only desirous of making the Church service more lively and varied.

I hope you will be contented to show us an example of a free church for the poor, with a service rendered attractive by the architectural appropriateness of the edifice, and by really good devotional music, the whole being solemn, earnest, reverential, and yet not needlessly at variance with established usage.

I do not approve of an entire choral service in a parish or district church.

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*Undesirableness of introducing a Cathedral Service into  
Parish Churches.*

“LONDON HOUSE, Feb. 26, 1851.

“.... Although I am not prepared to assert that the introduction of the cathedral service into parish churches is contrary to law, I think it very inexpedient, and I have frequently expressed my disapproval of it, as being open to this amongst other objections, that it is hardly possible for an ordinary congregation to take part in those portions of the service which are chanted, except in the *Venite exultemus*, the *Jubilate*, &c. when sung to a plain simple chant to which the congregation are accustomed.

It appears to me that this argument ought to have weight with those clergymen who wish to introduce cathedral forms into their parish churches; viz. that many persons entertain a very strong objection to them, whereas none are offended by the ordinary mode of celebrating divine service, with the customary admixture of singing and chanting.

The same remark applies to the wearing of surplices by the persons composing the choir, and to their walking in procession. This certainly has never been customary in parish churches, and why should it be now sought to introduce it, at the risk, or rather with the certainty, of giving offence to many persons, even if many others should be pleased with it?

As no clergyman is *required* to do it, surely it is a case to which the rules of Christian prudence and charity very strongly apply. I entreat you most earnestly to reconsider your determination, and to remove a cause of offence, which at all events no law or custom of the Church binds you to retain. ....”

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*The Laity not to be excluded from Chancels.*

“FULHAM, Aug. 6, 1851.

“.... Supposing it to be right that the clergy should have a separate place in the church apart from the laity, I consider that the principle is sufficiently maintained by the practice which has obtained since the time of Archbishop Laud, by whom it was introduced, of railing off a space in front of the Communion Table, within which the officiating clergy may remain when not in the reading-desk or pulpit. If the entire chancel is to be set apart for carrying out this principle, an undue prominence is given to the principle itself, and a large space is left unoccupied, which, in the present state of our population, can ill be afforded....

It is certain that at the first and least Protestant period of our Reformation, it was not thought necessary to exclude the laity from the choir or chancel. This appears from the Rubric in the Prayer-Book of 1549, after the Offertory sentences.... It seems probable, looking to this Rubric, and to the practice in Roman Catholic Churches at the present day, that before the Reformation the whole congregation assembled in the choir at the celebration of the Mass. This practice has been continued to the present day, and now universally prevails in our cathedrals. It appears to me therefore that the reservation of the whole chancel to the clergy and their assistants is unnecessary, and at variance with true Christian feeling, ancient practice, and the custom of our own Church; and that a screen, or barrier with gates, visibly and practically asserting such reservation, is a thing which ought not to be allowed.

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*To the Bishop of Salisbury.—Measures must be taken against the aggressions of Popery.*

“ Aug. 20, 1858.

“.... I have long been of opinion that we ought to take measures of a directly defensive nature against the encroachments of Popery ; and that implies not merely self-protection but aggression. I feel this necessity more particularly with regard to my own diocese, where the mischievous activity of — and other men of the same stamp must be resisted and countervailed by more vigorous efforts than have hitherto been employed. Something may be done by curates specially commissioned for the purpose ; and more still, I am induced to think, by well-informed and well-trained lay readers, such as those who have worked so successfully in Ireland.

It appeared to me that the plan suggested by Dr. — was one which each Bishop might adopt or not, according to the circumstances of his own diocese ; while I felt pretty certain that if it were made a subject of discussion with all of us, much unpleasantness would have arisen, and those who, like me, felt strongly the necessity of some such effort, would have been precluded from joining in it by the expressed objections of others.

Many of the Low Church party will not like having anything to do with a measure adopted by those whom they consider too *high*.

There are difficulties no doubt in the way, but I am determined to try the plan in my own diocese, if I can find the means.”....

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This portion of the Bishop's life may fitly be closed by quoting a letter, addressed to the clergyman with



whom he had been most directly brought into collision, on the occasion of a domestic calamity; which will show that estrangement could not destroy the natural kindness of the Bishop's heart.

“FULHAM, Nov. 6, 1854.

“MY DEAR SIR,—Although unfortunately estranged from you by the events which took place while you were under my jurisdiction, I have not ceased to feel an interest in your welfare; and I hope that you will not take it amiss, if I assure you of my sincere sympathy, under the heavy affliction with which it has pleased God to visit you; and of my prayers that it may please Him who has laid this burthen upon you to give you strength to bear it, and to alleviate it with the consolations which none but He can give.

“I am, my dear Sir,

“Your faithful Servant,

“C. J. LONDON.

“The Rev. W. J. E. Bennett.”

THE EXHIBITION YEAR —

1854 — CHURCH EXTENDED THE

ANTICIPATIONS OF

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himice than the House of Commons, or the C  
the Privy Council. Yet he still, in his corres  
said that he considered that the revival of Con  
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In subsequent years he took part in the proce  
of the Upper House. In 1854 he moved for a  
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episcopate would be redeemed, Bishop Blomfield seems to have again turned his thoughts to this subject. He writes to Lord Derby:—

“I believe that nothing would give greater satisfaction to the Church, than an admission on the part of the Government, that an increase of the episcopate is required, but that the mode and details of that increase require, and will receive, due consideration. Lord Blandford’s plan would be, in effect, the destruction of the whole cathedral or capitular system. This may or may not be advisable, but it must not be effected in this summary way.

I think that the conversion of deans into bishops may, in some cases, be a convenient and easy mode of extending the episcopate; but this question must be looked at in a general light, and not settled by the selection of a single deanery by way of example....”

We hasten on to notice briefly the last important official act of Bishop Blomfield’s episcopate—his Visitation Charge in 1854. In this Charge, delivered during the early progress of the war with Russia, the Bishop congratulates the nation, under the difficult position in which she was then placed, on the fact that the different classes of society were bound together by ties of good-will and mutual kindness, to a greater degree than had formerly been the case; and that the higher ranks had seen and recognised the duty and advantage of exerting themselves to promote the real interests, temporal and spiritual, of the lower. Of this improved state of feeling, the Bishop attributes no small part to the exertions of the clergy; “and although,” he says, “I may be thought not to be an impartial judge

in such a case, I cannot hesitate to declare my conviction, that the clergy have been the chief instruments in bettering the condition of the poor in this country; not merely by the assiduous inculcation of Christian principle in their churches and schools; not merely by devoting their time, and a more than proportionate measure of their worldly means, to the work of education; but by their attention to the temporal wants of their parishioners; by their activity and judgment in carrying into effect the sanitary improvements suggested by the humanity of true philanthropists, and sanctioned by the wisdom of a Christian legislature."

But the great bulk of this Charge is taken up with that subject which, more than any other, Bishop Blomfield made his own—Church Extension. Repeating the description which he had given in 1846, of the then existing spiritual destitution of London, and the efforts which had already been made to remedy it, he showed how the same evils still existed in as great or even a greater degree, and still required an application of the same remedies. For Bishop Blomfield to the last firmly believed in the measures which he had himself originated, as the best means of improving the religious condition of the London poor. More churches, more clergymen, more schools and parochial institutions—this was still the sum and substance of what he asked for the extension of the Church's influence. House to house visitation he considered to be the secret of a clergyman's usefulness; and in other plans, such as open air preaching, he had not much faith.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Note at the end of this Volume.

This subject of "Home Missions," as they would now be called, was one which Bishop Blomfield dwelt upon with ever-increasing earnestness; though an energetic promoter of the cause of foreign missions, it was to the evils lying at our own doors that he most emphatically directed the attention of Churchmen. Thus, in a sermon written on the subject, after saying that as a nation we have much to answer for in the neglect of opportunities for spreading Christ's kingdom abroad, he proceeds thus :—

"But have we not also to answer for some degree of neglect nearer home, in that portion of the Lord's harvest-field which lies immediately around us, where we have no excuse to urge of ignorance or remoteness of interest? Is there not a wide and most important field of evangelical labour in our own country, in the very bosom of our Church? Are there not multitudes, even in this land of light, and inquiry, and benevolence, who faint, and are '*scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd*;' who have only a nominal interest in the benefits of that redemption which Christ wrought for all; who are perishing of spiritual famine; and in the very citadel and stronghold of Gospel truth are '*taken captives by Satan at his will*?' I speak not here of those, who ostensibly profess Christianity, and observe some of its forms, while they have nothing of its spirit, none of its heart-constraining motives, its rich consolations, its blessed assurances (though even these present a harvest-field for which our labours are required); but I speak of the thousands of poor sinners who have been nurtured in ignorance and vice, knowing the holy name of their Creator only in its profanation; and his Sabbaths only as more convenient opportunities of debauchery and theft. Does it not sometimes happen that our sympathy

is awakened for the darkness and degradation of heathen tribes, while multitudes of our own countrymen, our neighbours, the persons who toil for our profit or enjoyment, are perishing for lack of knowledge at our very doors, not tasting so much as the crumbs which fall from our intellectual or spiritual banquet; who, instead of being gathered by our charitable exertions into the garner of the Lord, are *'as the grass upon the housetops, which withereth before it groweth up; wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.'*"

Perhaps, also, he became increasingly alive to the fact that in the work of Church extension, the men are even more necessary than the buildings. In the same sermon he had said:—

"I dwell particularly upon the want of additional clergymen, because it is not enough to build a church in a particular spot, and to cause divine worship to be solemnized therein at stated times. Important and beneficial as such a provision would be, even if it went no further, it would by no means answer the requirements of the case. It will greatly benefit those who are disposed to go to church, but it will be of no avail to those who are not; to the profane, the careless, the miserably poor; those who are unwilling or ashamed to join in the public worship of God. But every church should have its own district, and its own pastor stationed therein, whose duty it will be, not only to stand on the watch-tower, and to proclaim the messages of pardon, and the law of holiness, to those who may be willing to come and hearken to him; but to carry it forth, with all diligence and earnestness, into every part of his allotted field of labour; to bear the light of the Gospel into the darkest hiding places of ignorance and vice, and its consolations into the most obscure receptacles of indi-

gence and misery; to rescue the younger members of his flock from the fatal consequences of neglect and evil example; to teach the simple, to strengthen the weak, to drive away error, to declare, to enforce, to exemplify God's truth. This is the method which God Himself has appointed for the accomplishment of His gracious purposes, the sanctification and salvation of mankind; and in the present state and condition of mankind, nothing short of this will effect it. Legislators may enact, magistrates may punish or coerce, and the worst results of human corruption may be prevented, as far as the interests of society are concerned, for a time. But the evil cannot so be cured, nor the disease removed, although its symptoms may be palliated. It is to religion that we must look for the cure; to religion, placed before the people at large, pressed upon their notice, made plain to their understandings, recommended to their affections by all the appliances of human wisdom and charity, blessed by that Holy Spirit who will not desert His own work when taken in hand with sincerity, and carried on with energy, and in humble reliance upon His aid and blessing. It is therefore to the Church, and to the Clergy, that the country is to look for its safety, for by no other instruments can it be imbued with right principles, or kept, as it were, in the precincts of God's favour and the light of His countenance. And I would again assert, in the most emphatic manner, that all attempts at economic reform, all poor-laws, all regulations of police, all systems of reward and punishment will be wholly ineffectual, if you do not multiply churches and clergymen, schools and teachers, so as not only to supply the deficiency which now exists, but to keep pace with the growth of the population. These, as they will be the surest, will also in the end be infinitely the cheapest remedy that can be applied to the existing evil."

On the necessity of employing some subordinate agency in the work of Pastoral Visitation among the poor, he wrote thus during the last few years of his episcopate:—

“FULHAM, Nov. 18, 1851.

“.... I feel very strongly the desirableness of increasing the ministrations of the clergy amongst the poor, who will not attend our fine churches, even where there is room for them. Most of the incumbents of the great London parishes have extra services for the poor in their school-rooms, which are well attended; but more is needed in the way of personal intercourse and instruction. The Scripture Readers have worked very well in a subordinate capacity; but we want some persons, deacons, or lay-teachers, who will hunt out the poor at their own homes on *Sundays*, the only day on which they are to be met with there. I have more than once pressed this upon some of the clergy....”

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“Sept. 21, 1854.

“.... I entertain some doubts as to churches to be used exclusively by the poor, a provision which seems to mark more strongly the already too wide distinction between them and the upper classes; and it certainly has not fully answered my expectations in Bethnal Green, where there are no pew-rents nor appropriated sittings in the new churches. The truth is, that what we want is home visitation and house lectures to bring to the poor a knowledge of the first truths and principles of religion, and so to prepare them to value the advantages of public worship when offered to them. At the same time the experiment of a church for the poor is worth trying.”



In his Charge of 1854 he makes use, though without entirely accepting them as correct, of the statistics contained in Mr. Horace Mann's Report on Religious Worship, which was published with the Census Tables of 1851. These statistics assisted him in demonstrating the necessity for the erection of additional churches in London, it being asserted that in the metropolitan districts there were more than 640,000 persons unprovided by any religious body whatever with the means of attending public worship.

Speaking of Church-rates—a subject which the recent decision of the House of Lords in the Braintree case had brought into prominence—the Bishop thus expresses his opinion of the efforts which were being made for their abolition:—

“It is impossible not to discern the symptoms of a common purpose, on the part of a considerable body of persons both in and out of Parliament, to devise and support measures for weakening the Church, with a view to her ultimate overthrow as an establishment, and to resist every proposal which is likely to augment her usefulness and influence. Differing from one another in religious opinion and profession, they are united by this common desire and intention, which many of them, indeed, do not scruple to avow. I say nothing here of the loss sustained by the clergy through the commutation of their tithes. That change in the nature of their property was, perhaps, rendered necessary by the great alterations which were taking place in agriculture, and the importance of those improvements which the payment of tithes was supposed to check. But it is now openly declared, that an attempt is to be made to interfere with that arrangement by which the clergy

were subjected to a great sacrifice of their legal dues for the sake of peace, and that nothing will satisfy the Church's opponents short of substituting for her endowments the purely voluntary system. Ground is already broken for the assault by the proposal to abolish Church-rates altogether ; and although the principle on which those are claimed by the Church differs materially from that upon which she grounds her rights to tithes, or an equivalent to tithes, her adversaries flatter themselves that if they succeed in carrying the outworks, the citadel will, ere long, be forced to capitulate."

The proposition, since so much debated, of removing some of the churches in the City of London, and transferring their endowments to more needy and populous districts, had already, in 1854, been brought before the legislature, and had met with the approbation of Bishop Blomfield. He says in his Charge :—

" You will probably expect me to make some allusion to a plan which has been brought forward with my consent, for removing such of the churches in the City of London as might clearly appear not to be required for the existing population, in order to procure the means of erecting others in large and populous parishes of the metropolis where additional churches are most urgently needed. Respecting this proposal, which involves some questions of great delicacy and difficulty, it cannot be a matter of surprise that there should exist a great difference of opinion. The bill for carrying it into effect, which passed the House of Lords but was rejected by the Commons, was, perhaps, too large and indefinite in its provisions, although, if it had passed into a law, I am persuaded that the greatest caution would have been observed in their practical application. My own opinion remains unchanged, that where it can

be clearly ascertained that a church is not wanted, it is expedient and proper to remove it, if by such removal we can obtain the means of erecting another where the spiritual wants of the people far exceed the existing provision for public worship and pastoral superintendence, seeing that our utmost efforts are not likely to procure the funds requisite to supply the existing deficiency."

In the following year he made one further effort in the cause of Church extension, by appealing to the great landed proprietors in London, and to the Crown, to raise a sum of £500,000 in annual instalments, for the erection of churches and parsonage houses. Towards this fund he himself promised to contribute £5,000, in five annual instalments—a promise which his resignation and death did not allow him to perform.

It may be noticed that in his last Charge, Bishop Blomfield does not seem to anticipate the internal dangers which so soon began to disturb the peace of the Church, from the rationalistic teaching of some of her most distinguished members. This, however, was rather because these dangers had not yet assumed so formidable a shape as to require immediate measures, than because he did not foresee the results to which the rationalistic spirit was tending. On this subject he spoke thus in 1850 :—

"I cannot but think that we have more to apprehend from the theology of Germany than from that of Rome—from that which deifies human reason than that which seeks to blind or stifle it—from a school which labours to reconcile Christianity with its own philosophy, by stripping the Gospel of all its characteristic features,

and reducing it to the level of a human system, than from a Church which rejects and condemns even the soundest conclusions of true philosophy when they are at variance with the determinations of its own presumed infallibility. . . .”

“Now, I fear that there are some persons, who think that they may safely go to a certain length with these bold adventurers in theology, without following them into *all* their extravagant speculations; for instance, that they may deny the inspiration of Holy Scripture, as the Church understands it, without calling in question the evidences, that is, the *historical* evidences, of Christianity; that they may believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and yet cast off what they term a superstitious reverence for the text (not the *letter*, but the substantive contents,) of the Bible. But I do not believe it possible for any one thus to undervalue and weaken the authority of the Apostles and Prophets, and so to undermine the foundations of his belief, without impairing the soundness of the superstructure, and diluting his faith in Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone. To deny the inspiration of Scripture, is one step towards the rejection of the Gospel as a revelation from God. Against this fatal heresy I would earnestly caution my younger brethren, as being one from which, in the present state of the human mind, we have much more to fear than from the encroachment of popery. . . . The true safeguard and preservative from both extremes is to be found in the general diffusion of sound scriptural knowledge by means of education; in a sedulous inculcation of the doctrines of our Reformed Church, as drawn from the inspired Word of God; and in a firm adherence to her Creeds, and Liturgies, and Articles. If these be cast aside; or if, while they are subscribed to in the letter, they are understood and interpreted in a non-natural sense, so as to explain away,

on one side, the fundamental truths of Christianity, or, on the other, the distinctive doctrines of our Church, we shall soon be afloat on a sea of error, drifting helplessly amongst the shoals and quicksands of heresy, old and new. The Church will no longer be an ark of safety; its ministry will be a ministry, not of peace but of confusion; and what the results will be, we may learn from the example of the Continental Churches, which are now reaping the bitter fruits of their defection from catholic truth and order, and of their separation of religious from secular education."

In the last year of his personal administration of the diocese, writing to one, whose name subsequently became conspicuous in connexion with rationalistic doctrine, he said:—

".... The question whether the Mosaic account of the creation can be reconciled with the discoveries of geology, is not a fit subject for discussion in the pulpit before a mixed congregation. Considering the allusions made by our Lord and by St. Paul to the history of man's primæval state, as recorded in the Book of Genesis by an inspired prophet and lawgiver, a preacher ought to hesitate before he speaks of it as a 'fiction,' or 'poetical allegory.' He who rejects the Old Testament must have a very vague and doubtful faith in the New. I do not pretend to question your right to put forth what I hold to be heterodox opinions in print, but I cannot allow them to be advanced in the pulpits of my diocese; and I must beg of you, that you will abstain from doing so, or that you will forbear from preaching in the diocese of London. ...."

Had Bishop Blomfield been aware, that the year 1855 was destined to be the last of his labours as chief pastor

of the diocese of London, and had he with that knowledge reviewed the results of his long episcopate, he might have had, on the whole, great cause to be thankful for what he had been permitted to accomplish. No man could have thrown himself with greater zeal into the work which lay before him, and few possessed greater abilities for coping with the difficulties of which that work was full. Some of his most cherished schemes, indeed, had not answered his expectations, and in some cases he had been compelled to retrace his own steps ; yet on the whole the aspect of the Church in general, at the moment when he was to cease to be one of its rulers, was encouraging. No controversy on any point of vital importance was agitating the Church ; while schemes of practical usefulness were being organized and carried by the various religious parties, each acting according to its own ideas, and each attaining a certain measure of success. And with regard to that which was one of the most cheering signs of the times for the Church of England—the increased zeal and activity of the clergy—Bishop Blomfield, had he been given to self-approbation, might have claimed no small part of the credit which this improvement reflected upon the clerical body. He had set an example of unwearying energy and abundant labour, not only to the clergy in general, but to the order to which he himself had been raised. Thirty years before, the popular notion of a Bishop, justified by the habits of many who occupied the bench, was that of a stately gentleman, of dignified demeanour and ample income, who appeared in public on solemn occasions, at confirmations and visitations, passing the rest of his time either in retired leisure, or in the society of

London, or, perhaps, in fulfilling the duties of some other preferment which he held in conjunction with his bishopric; and whose name was remembered in his diocese, rather from the circumstance of so many of the cathedral dignities being filled by those who bore it, than from any permanent benefit which he had conferred upon the districts of which he had the spiritual oversight. But Bishop Blomfield was one of the earliest to set the example of an active Bishop, stimulating and directing all the schemes of religious usefulness which he found in his diocese, or if necessary creating new ones, visiting personally even the most remote districts, and becoming acquainted with the circumstances and character of every parish and every clergyman, yet not neglecting the social or legislative duties which his position entailed upon him; an example which since then has been followed by so many prelates, with the best results to the Church.

It will be attempted, in the next two chapters, to give some idea of the private and personal character of Bishop Blomfield, before proceeding to sketch the close of his episcopate and of his life.

## CHAPTER IX.

PRIVATE AND DOMESTIC LIFE OF BISHOP BLOMFIELD—HIS PERSONAL APPEARANCE — CHARACTER OF HIS MIND — HIS INDUSTRY — HIS INTERCOURSE WITH HIS CLERGY—AND WITH LITERARY MEN—HIS HUMOUR—HIS VIEWS ON AMUSEMENTS—HIS OWN RECREATIONS—POWERS OF VERSIFICATION—CARE OF THE HOUSE AND ESTATE AT FULHAM,

THE preceding pages have, for the most part, represented Bishop Blomfield in his public life ; but a memoir of him would not be complete without some account of his life at home and in society, and a sketch of his character, which can only be partially understood from a record of his public acts. Yet so completely were his time and thoughts occupied with the duties of his office, and with the additional work which his ceaseless activity created for himself, that he had little leisure for the pursuits and recreations of domestic life. Few men were naturally more capable of appreciating the enjoyments of home, the sympathies of friendship, and the intercourse of society ; but he had to make the sacrifice demanded of most public men—the surrender of his own natural tastes, and of the claims of family and friends, to the wider interests of the Church.

Bishop Blomfield had been favoured by nature with excellent endowments of body and mind. The following account of his personal appearance has been



kindly communicated by one who knew the Bishop's countenance from frequent study of it, and whose crayon portrait of him is so well known. Mr. Richmond writes :—

“10, YORK STREET, PORTMAN SQUARE,  
Dec. 16, 1862.

“MY DEAR MR. BLOMFIELD,—When you ask me to send you a short description of your father's ‘countenance and appearance,’ I would willingly refer you to the head engraved after my drawing, or to the figure on which I am still engaged for his monument in St. Paul's Cathedral; but as that would be only to evade your request, I will endeavour, in as few words as I can, to set down my impression of your father's appearance in face and figure.

Such descriptions, I think, usually begin with the height,

The Bishop of London was of middle stature, about five feet eight, but certainly looking a larger man than he was; and when I first had the honour of his acquaintance, in 1833, was stouter in face and figure than he became in after life. His limbs were well knit and shapely, and the hands and feet small. His complexion was then very pale, though often and quickly suffused by a slight blush of colour, and the texture of the skin and hair was unusually fine and soft. The head, which was large and very remarkable, was both high, and broad, and long; but the width ruled the height as the length ruled the width. Seen among others, it shone out as a great ball of light.

Seen in full, the features seemed small and youthful for the face and head; but the mouth, though small, was decided and full of character, and the lips had some of the characteristics of infancy in their delicate rounding

and shapeliness ; while the whole mouth was tremulous with sensibility and humour. The nose widened gradually to the nostrils : these were well marked, and expressed great energy and quick feeling. The eyes were large and full, and the upper eyelid falling into one line over part of the eye, gave great vigour and vivacity to the look ; and yet the expression of the eye, itself of a violet-blue tint, such as I have rarely seen, was full of humanity, of tenderness, and pity. Notwithstanding the delicacy of its tint, the eye sometimes looked like a dark one, I suppose from the activity of the pupil. Such were the elements of that face over which the lights and shades of thought and feeling played with the rapidity of summer lightning, on which nothing that was unjust, ungenerous, or vain could rest : for, like the face of childhood, it was a transparent mirror of the life within ; and the difficulty of describing with pen or pencil such a countenance, arises from the very great compass of it, and the almost contrary elements composing it ; in middle life one saw the warfare, as in later life the victory. In common with almost all great heads, there was a touch of sadness underlying all that revealed itself when the face was in repose. But whatever I have attempted to set down seems dull and spiritless, and, therefore, without resemblance to him in whom the fire of life seemed to burn brighter and quicker than in other men.

His very walk was significant of this—that short, firm, and rapid step, with a sort of *I am ready* expression in it I always remember as most characteristic. And then the quick almost abrupt stop in it, even when coming towards you to greet or welcome you ; also the way he stood, erect, and resting equally on both feet, they well apart, often the hands crossed behind him, never languid, never reclining, turning full to the person addressed, ‘moving altogether when’ he ‘moved at all.’

These, and a thousand other traits, those who knew and therefore loved him, will remember without my suggestion. He looked every inch a churchman, and, unbounded in his generosity to others, was severe really only to himself.

Believe me,

My dear Mr. Blomfield,

Most faithfully yours,

GEORGE RICHMOND."

Bishop Blomfield must have been endued by nature with mental powers much above the average ; but it was through his early training and subsequent habits of diligent self-culture, that abilities, naturally excellent, reached their highest development. It was a happy constitution of his natural temperament that nothing was greatly in excess. His reason, his imagination, and his feelings, were, on the whole, evenly balanced, so as to produce a character well fitted for the business of life. It has been thought that his mind was deficient in imagination ; yet he was not wanting in this quality, as is sufficiently proved by portions of his sermons and speeches. His mind also was full of great designs and noble aspirations ; and he possessed, in no common degree, an enthusiasm, without which he never would have attempted some of his best and most successful works. The fire was always there, often latent under an outward reserve ; but, whenever the occasion required, kindling into no uncertain flame. Yet this warmth of feeling was undoubtedly in excess of the other parts of his nature. There was at times a quickness of temper which in some degree marred the per-

fection of his character, but over this infirmity he by degrees acquired almost complete control. In 1833, when Archbishop Sumner, then Bishop of Chester, was talking with a friend of the power over themselves which men might acquire through Divine grace, and how much they might accomplish, he gave Bishop Blomfield as an instance of this: "I have known him intimately," remarked Bishop Sumner, "from his college days, and I know no man who has overcome his natural infirmities as the Bishop of London has." These infirmities were to be found in a nature which was affectionate, generous, and forgiving: he was as unwilling to inflict an injury as he was incapable of harbouring resentment.

One of the Bishop's most marked characteristics was a peculiar quickness of action, which no amount of experience could entirely check. No man could draw a more correct conclusion from given data, or in a shorter time; but the activity of his temperament was averse to protracted deliberation, and he did not always stay to examine the correctness of the data which were offered him: so that, while generally as sound in his conclusions as he was wise in counsel, there were some occasions when he formed his opinions too hastily. To this cause chiefly must be attributed any errors of judgment into which he fell during his episcopate. His frank and honest mind was always open to conviction; and if a hasty opinion or expression had been injurious to another, he was ready at once to retract it: indeed, he was sometimes too ready to accept the explanations offered him; with his charitable and unsuspecting nature, he could hardly be persuaded that the rest of

the world was not as honest as himself. Naturally averse to contradiction, accustomed to deference, and confiding in the sincerity of every one who approached him, Bishop Blomfield would sometimes be led by a man who, "instead of giving free counsel, sung him a song of '*placebo*.'" But in general he trusted in his own powers, took counsel chiefly with himself, was as quick in thought as in action; and thus, at the risk of some failures, accomplished an amount of work, and achieved successes, which a man less ready and courageous would not even have attempted. His occasional errors of judgment, and his readiness to be convinced if he was wrong, gave him at times the appearance of inconsistency; as will almost always be the case, when public men fall into mistakes and then have the courage to correct them. And it was this failing, perhaps, which gave colour to a charge sometimes brought against him, but strangely unjust to one of the most sincere of men, that he governed his diocese by finesse. Singleness of motive and perfect honesty were of the very essence of his nature; and he was wholly incapable of anything approaching to double dealing.

It has been remarked that Bishop Blomfield's faculties owed much of their force to their assiduous cultivation. Untiring industry was one of the most marked features of his character. His ceaseless activity led him to spend something of his strength in details, some of which might have been equally well attended to by others. It was owing, probably, to this cause, that he attended personally to the technical business of the diocese, and wrote with his own hand answers to almost all the

letters, more than thirty of which he usually received every day ; until he broke down—mainly, indeed, under the burden of weightier responsibilities, but partly also under the excess of his own activity. He would probably have lived longer, or, at least, have retained his strength more unimpaired, had he followed the wise counsel of one of his medical advisers :—"My Lord, never enter your study after six o'clock in the evening." Yet it was this activity which, both at his entrance on the See of London and during his whole incumbency, led him to investigate the minutest details of his diocese, and to sweep away or reform abuses, which if apparently insignificant when taken singly, yet together brought merited reproach on the Church, and materially impaired its efficiency. Had Bishop Blomfield possessed a less indefatigable energy, he would have failed in the great work of reform which was needed, not only for the usefulness, but for the permanence of the Church of England.

But if the Bishop attended to details, he never wasted time on trifles : he had too much largeness of mind and too momentous duties for this. No man, indeed, had a deeper conviction of the value of time, which he husbanded and made the best use of from his earliest years. No moment was wasted, no opportunity lost : he shunned delays, never putting off till the morrow the work of to-day, nor deferring till the afternoon the duties of the morning. His promptitude was remarkable : with him a matter would be completed, while another would be only thinking of it. He wasted no time in diplomacy. If he had any matter to arrange with a Government Department, he would drive down

to Whitehall, and in a few words obtain the settlement of questions, which might otherwise have been lost in the ambiguities of official correspondence. Did the building of a church come to a stand through some technical difficulty, or a populous but ill-endowed district need an augmentation of its income, the Bishop would take care to attend the next meeting of Commissioners, and by the weight of his presence<sup>1</sup> obtain what might have been indefinitely postponed, or have been dealt in more scant measure. The same characteristic promptness showed itself even in trifling matters. Thus, for instance, if in conversation any difficulty arose about a word, a date, or a fact of science or history, the necessary book of reference was at once fetched from the library, and the point in dispute settled. This promptitude, combined with an admirable method and completeness in all he did, enabled him not only efficiently to administer the burdensome affairs of his diocese, but also to give much personal service to the great Church Societies, to take an active and efficient part in the House of Lords and on Commissions, and vigorously to prosecute the various schemes of Church Extension which he had set on foot. His method he had no doubt

<sup>1</sup> The weight of Bishop Blomfield's presence in the first Ecclesiastical Commission, has been described by Sydney Smith with his usual wit and exaggeration. The Bishop's weight in the present Commission may be illustrated by the following anecdote. An influential London clergyman attended one of the sittings of the Commissioners when Bishop Blomfield was not present, and made a vain attempt to have some important business completed. "It is no use," said the Archbishop of York (Vernon Harcourt), "it is no use for you, Mr. L., to come to *us* to finish your business; we never do anything more than nib our pens till the Bishop of London comes."

acquired in early life, through the systematic regularity with which at school and the university he pursued his studies ; while his mathematical reading strengthened the logical powers of his mind, and enabled him instantly to grasp any subject. He had a marvellous facility of turning his mind to any matter presented to him, and—what is a rare test of power—he seemed to have the faculty of doing anything he pleased, and of always doing it well. The result of all this, combined with his personal experience in every department of clerical life, was to make him remarkable as an excellent man of business, a distinction rarely attainable by members of a sacred profession which has little training in secular pursuits. And if Bishop Blomfield offended sometimes by an occasional brusqueness of manner, he pleased more often by qualities, which the inhabitants of a commercial city value highly, scrupulous punctuality in all his engagements, and more than common rapidity and accuracy in the despatch of business.

These qualities were observable on all occasions, but were most called into action at his weekly days of business with the clergy. From twenty to thirty might attend on a Friday morning with the certainty that, however much they might be kept waiting before being ushered into his presence, he would then neither detain them long nor leave their business unfinished. You felt that, for the time he was giving you himself, his whole mind was concentrated on your affairs. There was nothing of what Lord Bacon quaintly calls “prefaces, and passages, and excusations, and other speeches of reference to the person, which are great wastes of



time," but a brief, sometimes an abrupt welcome. The Bishop sat at one end of a table with a conversation book before him, in which he noted rapidly the heads of the subject, or referred to a former interview. Not that his memory required much refreshing, for it might truly be said of him, that "he forgot nothing but injuries." He expected you to state your case as briefly as possible, and in an instant seized on its meaning. He would generally give an immediate opinion, almost always correct, on matters often of much difficulty; or, if they required further consideration, an answer would be conveyed by post, often the same evening, almost always the next day.

"I have now before me," writes one of the most excellent and laborious of the clergy in the diocese;—"I have now before me that library so well known to all the London clergy, in which as large an amount of solid work and real business was done every week as in any house in London, not even excepting *The House*. I have before me the Bishop's well-known face, which none of us can ever forget—his finely-developed head, his keen yet quiet eye, his fixed attention, the quickness which not only apprehended and accurately took off all that was told him, but even went ahead so as to anticipate what was about to be said, and to make one see that it was unnecessary to finish the half-completed sentence. If I had not learnt it before, I should at all events have learnt in that library the importance of the common but most practical adage—'When you go to a man of business, keep to your business, finish your business, and then go about your business.' I should have learnt it, not from any want of kindness in the Bishop's manner, but from the fixed attention which he gave to the matter before him, and the promptness with

which his judgment was delivered, and the advice which you were seeking bestowed."

But if the need arose, Bishop Blomfield did not grudge the expenditure of more time. He never failed to keep the special appointments which he made with his clergy when they wished to consult him on matters of grave importance, and he spared neither time nor pains in advising and assisting them. Thus to one of his clergy, who had a parish large enough for a diocese, he said : " You may rely on my full confidence and firm support. And as I know what demands will be made on your time by the requirements of such a parish, I will not expect you on my usual day for receiving the clergy, but I will, as often as you request it, appoint a special day for seeing you on the concerns of St. —, though I should have to come to town expressly for the purpose." And such words from the Bishop were not mere compliments, but promises faithfully and cheerfully performed—so ready was the Bishop to give his time to those whose counsellor he was by office, although much of it was perforce taken up by others who had no real claims upon him.

As an instance of the interruptions to which he was obliged to submit, from persons who brought their real or imaginary grievances before him, the following anecdote may be related. A deputation, headed by a colonel in the army, waited upon him at London House, to represent to him the condition of the inmates of lunatic asylums, and to request him to make provision for their being regularly visited by the parochial clergy. The Bishop replied that he did not know whether the clergy

would be prepared to undertake this additional burden ; and that, even if they were, he did not think that the security thus afforded for the proper treatment of lunatics would be a very great one. " But," rejoined the colonel, " we would hail with satisfaction *any* additional security ; for I can assure your Lordship that there is not a single member of this deputation *who has not himself, at some time or other, been an inmate of a lunatic asylum !*" It may be imagined that, after this confession, the Bishop was not a little relieved when the deputation withdrew, and its members were seen quietly making their way past Norfolk House into Pall Mall.

We have seen what Bishop Blomfield was as a man of business. But to suppose him to have been nothing more than this would be to form a very inadequate conception of his character. The records of this memoir have shown how fully he understood the responsibilities of his high office ; how well he had comprehended the true idea of the Church of England, its high position in the Church Catholic, the greatness and extent of its missions, not only in this country, but in all parts of the world ; how, while he saw its blemishes and failures, he set himself to the task of correcting them ; how, in short, he was not only an able administrator of the Church, but also a wise and courageous, and on the whole successful reformer and rebuilders of much in it that had been impaired by the neglect of former generations. It would be superfluous to add anything here to the preceding narrative in order to illustrate these higher qualities in Bishop Blomfield's character.

It may, however, be interesting to call attention in

passing to one office ably filled by him, which has not since been discharged by any one else, or, at least, not in the same measure—perhaps because the need of it is not now so pressing. Bishop Blomfield was emphatically the Statesman of the Church. A jealous guardian of its principles and privileges, he could, nevertheless, take a reasonable and comprehensive view of its policy, as an institution divine in its origin and claims, and yet, at the same time, political in its establishment. Hence the weight which attached to his opinion in Parliament, the extent to which he was consulted in measures even indirectly affecting the Church, the cordial understanding between himself and some statesmen, such as Lord Aberdeen and Sir Robert Peel, and the respect entertained for him by others ; and if occasionally he came into collision with government, it left no permanent ill-will on either side. Thus at one time, in a correspondence which took place between Lord Palmerston and himself on the conventional jurisdiction exercised by the Bishop of London in the Colonies, the claims of authority were very warmly maintained on both sides, yet no unkindly sentiment remained afterwards in the Bishop's mind ; and nothing could exceed the kindness and delicacy of feeling shown towards him by Lord Palmerston at the time of his resignation of the See. More often, however, when the Government and Churchmen were arrayed against each other, Bishop Blomfield, by undertaking with success the office of a mediator, warded off more than one crisis, and thus did good service both to the Church and the State.

It has been remarked at the beginning of this chapter, that Bishop Blomfield's ceaseless activity created addi-

tional business for himself. But he did this not only for himself, but for the whole of the episcopal order. Not that there had never been some instances of zealous prelates before his time who had shaken off the dignified inaction which was once supposed to become their office ; but it was Bishop Blomfield who enlarged and methodized the work, created the greater part of it, and gave the whole as the future system of episcopal business. Two great branches of it were literally called into being by him, the Church Building movement, and the system of the present Colonial Church.

But to return from this digression to the Bishop's habits of industry. The diligence which has already been noticed as his characteristic in public business was observable also in all the work which he did in private. He rose in summer at six, in winter at half-past, and the time before breakfast was occupied with the study of Scripture, or with writing sermons and letters. The hours for prayers, for meals, and for everything in the household with which he had to do, were regulated with the same punctuality as his business. The brief interval between prayers and breakfast would be seized for work. His letters accompanied him to the table except when guests were in the house : for to them, in spite of his unceasing occupations, he never failed to show the attention of a kind and courteous host. Still, with all this pressure of work, the Bishop never seemed hurried. The result of this was that, by his industrious use of the early hours of each day, he had always overtaken his work long before the end of it. He never left anything to the last moment. His sermons, of which he wrote more than many parochial clergymen, were often

commenced on the previous Sunday, taken up again in the middle of unfinished sentences during any spare minutes he could command, and completed long before the time of their delivery. In the same way his Charges, which were delivered in the autumn, were written in the summer, and then carefully revised as the time of the Visitation drew near. And by thus husbanding and forestalling time, he completed all his more important and difficult work without any interference with his more regular duties.

It may be supposed that, with all this incessant round of business, Bishop Blomfield had not much leisure for study. Some have complained that he added nothing new to our theology, which is much the same as to complain that a Minister of State during his term of office had contributed nothing to the literature of his age. The days have passed away when a Gibson, a Sherlock, or a Lowth could find in a London bishopric a place for literary labours. Had Bishop Blomfield been a man of leisure, his powers of criticism and philological skill might have helped towards elucidating modern Biblical difficulties. But all he could do amidst his multifarious and engrossing duties was to make himself acquainted with the general progress of Theology in its various developments, particularly of the Rationalistic movement, which he watched with keen anxiety. In the earlier part of his ministerial life he had thoroughly read the best of our own great Divines, and had made himself master of the Romish controversy. In his days of comparative leisure, before his elevation to the episcopate, he had added to his classical and mathematical studies the knowledge of French and

Italian, and an acquaintance with modern history and general literature, and a considerable knowledge of botany and chemistry ; while, even in his busiest times, he kept himself *au courant* of all that was of real interest in the literature of the day, by reading the books themselves, or reviews, in the hour which he could spare of an evening for this recreation. Not long after his elevation to the See of London, Bishop Copleston, in writing to a relative of his own, thus bore testimony to his varied powers and acquirements :—

“I am very glad that you have seen the Bishop of London and Mrs. Blomfield. He is one of the most honest and unaffected, as well as the ablest of men. His talents are so great that no elevation makes him feel giddy, or out of his proper station. As a public speaker he is the best I ever heard ; and as a man of business I hardly know his equal. With all these he is a most accomplished man, not only learned and acute, but possessed of wit, pleasantry, and good taste ; a proficient in music ; conversant with the fine arts and general literature, modern as well as ancient. When to this you add that he is one of the most indefatigable and conscientious prelates of the day, you can scarcely produce an individual to be compared with him.”

The pains which, in earlier life, the Bishop had bestowed on his studies, were rewarded by his never forgetting what he had thus thoroughly acquired. His knowledge seemed to be arranged in his mind, much as his letters were arranged on his shelves ; in a moment he could lay his hand on a particular letter, though received years before ; and in the same way he could in an instant draw from the storehouse of his memory the knowledge which the occasion required, even though

he might not have read anything on the subject for many years. Thus on one occasion, in the House of Lords, some matter arose in which the Bishop was led to make a statement on a point of international law; and when, after the debate, one of the Peers expressed his surprise at a knowledge so unusual in a modern Churchman, the Bishop replied that he had acquired it thirty years before; for that, when he was rector of the little parish of Dunton, with time on his hands, he had amused himself with looking into Puffendorf and some of the other authorities. His thorough acquaintance with ecclesiastical law is well known—an acquaintance gained no doubt as much by long practical experience as by study; and of that mass of complications and contradictions, the Acts upon Church-building, it was said that there were but three persons in England who understood them, and that of these the Bishop of London was one.

Bishop Blomfield, perhaps, can hardly be said to have made any permanent addition to the literature, properly so called, of the country. But in the various sermons, charges, and speeches which he was called upon to deliver, he displayed not only weight of matter, but a correctness and elegance not always found in the writings of public men. His style, especially in his sermons, was the English of the last generation, more classical than is now in vogue; but it was always perfectly clear and unaffected. It was a frequent remark of his, that the divine whose style of composition he should most like to have was Robert Hall, and he often referred to his works when writing. In Hall, he used to say, there was the force of Johnson without his stiffness, and the



richness of Burke without his redundance. It was, perhaps, to be regretted that Bishop Blomfield always wrote his sermons ; his speeches were far more eloquent and effective : and though his merits in the pulpit were considerable, he would have won higher fame as a preacher had his sermons been occasionally spoken. But the reason given by him for not preaching from notes was a wise one : he knew the weight which was attached to every word of his ; and he feared lest an unguarded expression from the pulpit might do mischief or have afterwards to be unsaid. A hearer, qualified to judge, says of one of his oratorical efforts : "The grandest speech I ever heard was Bishop Blomfield's in the House of Lords on the Archbishop's resolutions on education in 1839—so weighty and telling in matter, so majestic in manner, and the voice the very soul of pathos." This last remark will recall to many, who heard Bishop Blomfield in the days of his vigour, the peculiar power and attractiveness of his voice. Never was a man more favoured by nature in this respect, in its clearness, its melody, and its pathos ; and it was employed in the most natural manner, with an entire absence of all art or attempt at effect : its utterances at once charmed the ear and moved the heart.

The society of literary men gave Bishop Blomfield peculiar pleasure, and this privilege he had enjoyed to some extent from the time when he won his university honours. On his removal to London, first to a parish, and then to the see, he found more frequent opportunities of meeting congenial minds. While Rector of Bishops-gate, he was elected to "The Club," the most select of all such societies, and which boasted Dr. Johnson and

Sir Joshua Reynolds as its founders. For many years the Bishop attended the reunions of the Club whenever it was in his power to do so. Thus, in an entry made in his diary of one of his first attendances, he writes :—

“Dined at the Club ; present, Bishop of London<sup>1</sup>, Lord Spencer, Mr. Lyttelton, Sir Walter Scott, Sir George Staunton, Mr. Marsden, and Mr. Heber.”

On his promotion to the see of London, he had further opportunities of meeting the best men of the time. During the days of his health and strength, the house at Fulham was filled with agreeable society; and such men as Sir James Mackintosh, Wordsworth, Rogers, the Bishop of Oxford, Sir David Dundas, Sir Henry Holland, and many others who might be named, gave no little charm to his table. At these times, the Bishop entered with a keen relish into the delights of social intercourse, and contributed more than his share to the general enjoyment, by the animation, the humour, and the learning of his conversation. It was in the company of men such as the Chevalier Bunsen, the present Master of Trinity Dr. Whewell, Macaulay, Hallam, and others of the same calibre, that the variety and exactness of Bishop Blomfield's knowledge were most fully shown. It was not only that he could hold his own with such men, but that whatever subject was started he seemed to be at home in it. On a subject with which the Bishop might be expected to be conversant, Bunsen has recorded

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Howley, the Bishop of London here alluded to, retired from the Club on his promotion to Lambeth ; Johnson's definition of a Club, “An assembly of good fellows meeting under certain conditions,” appearing to him, no doubt, inconsistent with the archiepiscopal dignity.

the following testimony to his quickness and readiness of mind :—

“Allowed to consign some lines to this book on Wednesday, the 17th November” (1841), “respecting what passed on the morning of that day between the Lord Bishop and me, I do so now, returning to this hospitable and lovely place. I had to lay before the Bishop, on that morning, the principal parts of the Liturgy proposed for the German congregations joining the English Bishopric at Jerusalem. . . . The Bishop had never seen any part of these services; he read them through literally from beginning to end (about 100 pages in 4to) in English, referring for important passages to the German original. The reading led naturally to questions, discussions, and explanations. The whole was completed by his Lordship from eight o’clock to eleven, with the family prayers and breakfast between. I marked on the margin the Bishop’s observations, which almost all contained or implied a correction received afterwards into the text. And I may be allowed to add, that having for twenty years studied the materials of the Prussian Liturgy, and drawn up myself, in the years 1821 to 1825, with my friend the Rev. Dr. Rothe, and used since the Capitoline Liturgy, I have never learnt so much about either from anybody as in these two hours and a half. I am happy and thankful to consign this fact here, relating to a work which will soon be printed, and which, under God’s blessing, will be planted in the cradle of Christianity as the German voice of Apostolic Catholicity in the sweet harmony of sister Churches of the Gospel. May God ever bless him who bestowed all the energies of his soul on this work !”

Neither Bunsen’s nor the Bishop’s devout aspirations were fully realized ; but the extract is given as a testi-

mony from no incompetent judge to the Bishop's mental powers. It was only in the intercourse of such men that he sustained a continuous conversation ; the contact of equal minds drew forth his latent powers and hidden stores, and showed how much he might have contributed to society if more leisure had been allowed him from weightier cares. In his social intercourse with other friends, he seemed to find relaxation in talk, which, while it did not tax his mind, was always instructive and agreeable, and often entertaining ; for Bishop Blomfield was gifted with no ordinary flow of genuine humour. This gift, so dangerous when unchecked, was tempered in him, as became a bishop, by charity and sobriety. His wit, as was natural in one whose early studies had been philological, was often *verbal* ; and he was a great lover of puns. It would be impossible to convey an adequate impression of his playful and ready humour ; for good sayings lose their point when repeated apart from the society and the circumstances which call them forth. A few specimens will be found in other parts of this Memoir. He excelled in relating anecdotes, and was second to none in the way in which he would tell a good story—so pointed and epigrammatic, the very look and tone contributing to the effect, and all natural and without an effort, the outpourings of a genial nature, when, without offence, reserve could be laid aside. He knew well where to draw the line ; and in his indulgence of an overflowing wit, he never lowered the dignity of his office, or the respect due to himself. It is true that in general conversation the honesty of his nature sometimes broke through his constitutional reserve, and led him into unguarded expressions ; but

one who knew him well has remarked, that if by so doing he ever unintentionally gave pain to others, he was ready to acknowledge the error. But if at times unguarded, he never divulged matters of public moment; his reticence on these points was as wise as it was remarkable; no one could accuse him of revealing a state-secret, or marring a scheme by premature discussion of it before his family or before strangers. For one who was so often occupied with great matters, and who must have returned home with his mind preoccupied with them, to have been thus guarded was no little merit.

While the Bishop's genial temperament found pleasure in innocent mirth, in his views of what was innocent he was guided by a high, and what some might think an over-strict, standard. The thorough unworldliness of his nature, the piety and purity of his spirit, perhaps the influence of his early habits in the simple and religious home of his own parents, disposed him to regard with caution the pleasures of the world; so that, without a tinge of Puritanism in his temperament, he was careful in the amusements which he allowed in his own household. Yet everything was permitted which could harmlessly contribute to their enjoyment. A playing-card was never, with his knowledge, allowed in his house; he had an objection to public theatres, without any prejudice against the drama in itself; and while he thought dancing an innocent and healthy pastime for the young, he disliked balls on account of the unwholesome excitement too often inseparable from them. In a large household, presided over by a man immersed in business, no excellence of example or discipline can prevent some irregularities creeping in; and the cases are too numerous in

which the affectionate and pious solicitude of a parent does not necessarily ensure the welfare of every member of a family. Happy as the Bishop was in the affection of his children, he could not altogether escape a father's trials.

His opinion on the strictness of life required not only in the clergy, but also in those who are preparing for Holy Orders, may be gathered from the following extracts from a letter written by him to one of his sons :—

“MY DEAREST F——, I do not absolutely condemn shooting even in a clergyman, though I think it much better that he should not indulge in it; as I know, from inquiry and observation, that it gives great offence to many people. This being the case, I think it desirable that a young man intended for Holy Orders should not acquire a taste for it, which may sometimes be a temptation to him afterwards: and, generally speaking, it is better that the sons of clergymen should be very guarded in their pursuits and amusements, and especially the sons of Bishops, who are always watched with a jealous and often with an unfriendly eye.

Of course, the example of my own family will always be brought in answer to any reasoning which I may employ in speaking to young men who are looking to admission into the ministry; and it is rather on account of your peculiar position as my son, than from anything absolutely wrong in the amusement itself, that I should request you to make this little sacrifice for my sake. I thank you, my dear F——, for writing to ask my opinion, the propriety of which, I am persuaded, you will see by-and-by, if you think it rather strict at present. But you will readily perceive a great difference between this and questions of dress, &c.—*that* principle, if just, might be extended to all the

necessary business of life. Clergymen *dress* as other men do ; but more soberly than other men are required to do, by reason of the nature of their calling. Here the question is—not whether they shall *shoot* as other men do, but whether sporting *at all* is suitable to their profession. If that be settled in the negative, it then becomes a question, whether those who are looking to be clergymen had better sport, or not ; and, with the knowledge which I have of people in general, I am inclined to recommend that they should not.

The same objection does not apply to *fishing*, simply because it is *considered* to be a more quiet and peaceable amusement. In fact, if the thing in itself be admitted to be innocent, the question of doing it, or not, becomes very much one of expediency, with reference partly to one's own tastes and habits, and partly to the feelings and prejudices of other men."

The following letter shows that the advice given to his own son in preparing for Orders, was still more strongly urged on others who had entered the ministry :—

"LONDON HOUSE, April 24, 1839.

"DEAR SIR,—It has been stated to me, that the parishioners of ——— are not satisfied with the provision made for the spiritual duties of that parish, partly because they have only alternate morning and evening service, partly because you reside at too great a distance to be readily applied to when wanted, and partly because you are very much occupied in *hunting*. This is new to me, and I cannot help expressing the concern which I feel at it. I have more than once told the clergy in general, and I have still more pointedly told those whom I have myself ordained, that no hunting clergyman can ever be an efficient minister of religion. The pursuit is utterly inconsistent with that

seriousness and quietness of demeanour and conduct, the want of which must weaken, if it does not destroy, the effect of his preaching. The pretext of health I consider to be wholly inadmissible. A clergyman may take horse exercise without hunting; and although hunting with beagles is less boisterous and unseemly than other kinds of hunting, still it *is* hunting, and in your own case it is felt to be inconsistent with what is due to the clerical office. I feel it my duty to call upon Mr. ——— to make some other arrangement for his duties. I am very sorry to be obliged to write to you in any other than the language of approbation, and I heartily wish that I may have been misinformed as to the fact of your hunting."

There was in Bishop Blomfield's disposition a natural fondness for the young, which formed a link between himself and them. During his holidays, or when he had more leisure than usual, he would take part in his children's recreations, and sometimes entertain them by composing amusing or descriptive verses, either 'about the incidents of a tour, or any circumstance of the hour. He had a gift of versification, and even a poetic vein, which, however, he had scarcely any time to indulge. The following is a specimen of his compositions, which may be compared with Wordsworth's sonnet on the same subject<sup>1</sup>:—

"MISERRIMUS."

*(The Inscription on a Gravestone in the Cloisters of Worcester Cathedral.)*

" Ask not whose silent ashes here repose  
Beneath the cold untitled stone; his name  
Inquire not; fortune knew it not, nor fame—  
Most Miserable! None can now disclose

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<sup>1</sup> No. 47, of Miscellaneous Sonnets.



That unremembered name, so fraught with woes—  
 Most Miserable ! O word of grief and shame !  
 Let not the precincts of God's house proclaim,  
 That of His children there was one, who chose  
 Unmitigable sorrows ; and declined  
 The healing waters of Siloam's fount,  
 And Gilead's precious balm, for all mankind  
 Shed freely on the sad but glorious mount  
 Of Calvary ; and dying unresigned  
 Sank into hopeless sleep to wait his dread account."

Nor did Bishop Blomfield, to the last, lose the power of finding amusement in those amenities of classical scholarship which had once been part of his serious occupations. It has been mentioned that, during his illness in 1836, he turned great part of Gray's *Elegy* into Latin verse: and even as late as 1851, he could still trifle, not inelegantly, in Greek *Elegiacs*. An inscription on the statue of a Nymph sleeping beside a Fountain, found at Rome, is thus given by *Gruter* :—

"Hujus Nympha loci, sacri custodia fontis,  
 Dormio, dum blandæ sentio murmur aquæ.  
 Parce meos, quisquis tangis cava marmora, somnos  
 Rumpere ; sive bibas, sive lavere, tace."

It having been mentioned in conversation that the inscription had thus been rendered in English by Pope :

"Nymph of the grot, these sacred streams I keep,  
 While to the murmurs of the wave I sleep.  
 O spare my slumbers, gently tread the cave ;  
 Or drink in silence, or in silence lave :"

the Bishop, next morning, sent the following Greek version to Sir David Dundas :

Κρήνης Νύμφα φύλαξ, ἐπὶ τῇ κρηπίδι καθεύδω,  
 "Υδατος ἐξ ἄντρων ἡδὺ κατειβομένου.  
 Φείδεο τῶν ὕπνων, ὅστις παρὰ κοιλάδ' ἀμείβεις  
 Πέτρων, σίγα πίων, σίγα τε λουσάμενος.

Bishop Blomfield's chief recreations were music and gardening. In both he took especial delight. His knowledge of music had been acquired in early years; and even in later life, he would occasionally accompany his children. He had a cultivated and refined taste, and an ear so sensitive, that the slightest discord, which would escape general observation, seemed to cause him acute pain. His acquaintance with the works of the best musicians was extensive: indeed, he only took pleasure in music of the very best kind. The concerts of Ancient Music were frequented by him from the time of his first coming to London. He took every opportunity, which did not interfere with more important engagements, of hearing the best performers, especially instrumentalists.

But the Bishop found his chief amusement in his garden. Early in life he had acquired a knowledge of botany, and he found in the Palace garden a soil in which he could employ and enlarge that knowledge. Part of the grounds had been a garden for many centuries, probably from the time that Fulham had become an episcopal residence. In the reign of Elizabeth, the garden was celebrated; and on one occasion, Bishop Aylmer had sought to propitiate her offended Majesty by a present of grapes. In the time of James the Second, Bishop Compton, who was not only an able and courageous prelate, but also a man of scientific acquirements, during his forced residence at Fulham, had amused himself with improving the garden, and enriching it with many trees, rare in this country at that time. Archbishop Howley, during his tenure of the see, had brought the grounds into conformity with

modern taste, and, besides many other improvements, had added to the Palace the wing which fronts the lawn. Bishop Blomfield spent much of his little leisure in planning further additions to the house and grounds. He employed himself in introducing the latest improvements into the garden, and planting it with new and choice trees; and his only fault was, that he did not use the axe with sufficient freedom. He seemed to know each tree and shrub, and to regard them with a kind of affection; and when guests were with him, it was his amusement to introduce them to the names and qualities of the rarer specimens. He took a lively interest in the Horticultural Society, of which he was a member, and he often attended the meetings at Chiswick Gardens, where many will remember to have seen him, regardless of the company around, examining each fruit and flower with close and delighted attention.

During his occupancy of Fulham, Bishop Blomfield had many opportunities of exercising his taste and liberality on the episcopal estate. The Palace and grounds are, for their size, as expensive to maintain as any in the country. The house stands round two courts; the first of which is as old as the time of Henry the Seventh, and which, in spite of Bishop Howley's liberality, was found by his successor in a very dilapidated state. Bishop Blomfield spent large sums in new-roofing the house, in building additional rooms, in rebuilding a wing of the old court, and in other works, so as to make what had been an inconvenient house a most comfortable residence, and to leave it to his successor almost entirely restored. The

palace grounds have about half a mile of river frontage, and the house, garden, and paddocks are surrounded by a moat a mile in circumference, probably a work of the Danes. To cleanse this immense moat, to remake the sluices, to replace the river embankments, to raise by several feet a water-meadow of many acres, to renew all the fences, and to put the whole of a neglected estate into a condition of perfect order, appeared in the Bishop's eyes to be a duty laid upon him as trustee of Church property. In these works, more than £10,000 were expended during his incumbency. Nor did he grudge this expenditure. Whatever he did, he did it with an open-handed generosity, which, if it erred, erred in never counting the cost.

Of the two episcopal residences, the Bishop always regarded London House as little more than an official place of business; but Fulham was his home, and a home dearly loved. Obligated to spend the season in London, he returned to Fulham in the summer with ever-increasing delight. He might well do so: the house so spacious, yet so thoroughly comfortable and domestic, the garden half hidden on the margin of the Thames, with its spreading lawn of soft and level turf shadowed with choice shrubs and goodly trees, the avenue of ancient elms, the circling moat guarding the whole from intrusion—all these, within a few miles of the metropolis, give to the Palace at Fulham a charm peculiarly its own; so close upon the restless world, yet itself "a haunt of ancient peace." No one appreciated this charm so much as the Bishop himself. He seemed to drink in new life from the sunshine, the birds, the flowers: this converse drew forth all the

hidden tenderness and simplicity of his nature, and brought him back from the absorbing interests of the outer world, into that inner communion by which a man grows and gathers strength. It was his greatest wish—a wish acceded to with delicate and thoughtful kindness—to pass his last hours in a place endeared to him by so many tender associations ; and it was his hope, with which every person of feeling will sympathize, that a place attached to the See by the traditions of eight centuries might never be sold into the hands of the spoiler, but remain a residence of the Bishops of London for centuries to come.

## CHAPTER X.

BISHOP BLOMFIELD'S MUNIFICENCE IN ALMSGIVING—KINDNESS TO THE  
CLERGY—FORGIVING DISPOSITION—SEVERITY WHEN NECESSARY—  
TESTIMONY OF CANON DALE—AND CANON CHAMPNEYS—NOT NAR-  
ROW IN HIS SYMPATHIES—HIS FRIENDSHIPS LASTING—HIS WORK  
IN THE PARISH OF FULHAM—HIS INTERCOURSE WITH HIS CHILDREN  
—HIS HUMILITY AND HONESTY—HIS PERSONAL PIETY.

IF Bishop Blomfield's liberality had stopped short at the kind of expenditure mentioned in the last chapter, or had the residue been hoarded up to leave a fortune to his family, he might have been accused of being as unlike the Apostles in his charity as he was in his wealth. But of all the features of Bishop Blomfield's character, munificence in almsgiving was the most conspicuous, and perhaps the best known to the world. He began life with a determination to give, if possible, one-fifth of his annual income in charity; a proportion which he thought no more than should be expected of a clergyman in easy circumstances, although for others ten per cent. might be enough. But as he became rich, he largely exceeded even his own liberal rule, and in most years gave away nearly or quite a third of his income to charitable purposes.

An exaggerated estimate was formed both of his income and his savings. Thus, in a friendly speech at the time of his resignation, it was stated that

the Bishop's insurances amounted to nearly £3,000 a year, the truth being that they did not reach a third part of that sum. Until his resignation he retained the revenues of the see, which, though very large, were not as enormous as many imagined them to be. It is true that in one year they reached the sum of £22,000, but in another they fell to £7,500; and the average of the twenty-eight years of Bishop Blomfield's incumbency amounted to between £15,000 and £16,000. Of this over £5,000 were set apart annually, to be bestowed in public and private charity, so that during the tenure of the see of London, he must have given away not much less than £150,000. Writing to a clergyman in 1851, he says:—

“I have directed my banker to pay my promised subscription to Messrs. ——. I could not do so before, for I really had no money to pay. Large as my income is, my subscriptions to different religious and charitable objects not unfrequently exceed my means of meeting them at the moment; and I am at this time pledged to the amount of several thousand pounds, which I shall not have it in my power to pay, unless it should please God to spare me two or three years longer.”

It must not be supposed from the Bishop's expressions in this letter, that in his boundless generosity he forgot the claims of justice. Nothing could exceed his scrupulousness about running into debt, or leaving tradesmen to wait for their money. He was as careful and methodical in these matters as he was in his other business.

Bishop Blomfield's gifts to Church societies, to works of Church extension, and to other public charities, were

well known. But this formed only a small portion of his alms. His name is doubtless recorded in "a book of remembrance," not written by an earthly hand, for deeds of mercy unknown to the world, and never mentioned by him, even to his most intimate friends. It fell to the lot of the Bishop's eldest son, after his death, to look through the more private and important papers left by his father. Among them he found many packets of letters carefully locked up, which had been received from persons in distress, and had been endorsed with their names, and with the sums which the Bishop had given to each. The letters were at once destroyed, and the names soon forgotten; but two facts remained impressed upon the memory—one the great number of applicants, and the very large amount of relief given; the other the unwearied beneficence which in many cases had aided the same person year after year. To bring forward further evidence would be to break the seal which the Bishop's delicacy of feeling affixed to his secret almsgiving; but it can with truth be said, that no deserving clergyman in distress ever appealed to him in vain; while in the case of some, both clergy and others, Bishop Blomfield obeyed that divine command, which bids us do good even "to the unthankful and the evil." The following testimony is borne by one of the leading clergy of the diocese:—

"This faint and imperfect outline of the Bishop's work in connexion with my parish, would be more defective than it is were I to pass over in silence a very important part of my communication with him. In a parish where the number of clergy had increased in seven years from twenty to fifty, with but inadequate



provision even for the smaller number, there must of necessity have been frequent calls on Christian liberality and on Christian sympathy. The Bishop well knew how to unite both here. To say that in such cases I never appealed to him in vain would be far short of the truth. Not only was his hand ever open to give largely, his heart was open also to give considerably and feelingly. Not content with a pecuniary contribution to meet the present exigency, he would exert his powerful influence to obtain permanent provision for the widow and the orphan, and this when the deceased or distressed clergyman had been one whom he could not conscientiously approve, or one who had acted in contradiction to his wishes and requirements. A remarkable instance of his forbearing and forgiving spirit here presents itself to my remembrance. He once felt it his duty, under peculiar circumstances, to refuse permission to officiate in his diocese, when the clergyman whom I had presented to him had concealed from me certain particulars of his past life, which had been communicated to the Bishop by his former diocesan. Indignant at this exposure, this clergyman printed and circulated the most malignant libel both on the Bishop and myself, dropping his papers into the area of London House, that they might be seen by the servants, and even intimating his intention to waylay the Bishop on his road to church, and to offer some personal insult, even to take his life. Not many months after, on one of my visits to London House, the Bishop said to me, when our parochial business was finished, 'Have you seen or heard of Mr. — lately?' 'No, my Lord,' I answered, 'have you?' 'I heard from Mr. — the other day,' rejoined the Bishop, 'that he was starving, and I sent him five pounds.' 'Did you not,' I asked, 'first require a written retraction of his infamous calumnies?' 'No,' replied the Bishop, 'that never entered my mind.'

This liberality was the fruit of natural kindness of heart, heightened and guided by the purest motives of Christian charity. It may seem strange to say of one who to many appeared severe in his rule as a bishop, that he was really one of the kindest and gentlest of men. He may perhaps have inherited notions of authority which were disappearing before the democratic progress of the age, and an exercise of power which, in earlier times, would have appeared only natural in a Bishop, seemed in his day, at times, to be somewhat peremptory. Be that as it may, his decided administration had on the whole an excellent effect ; it repressed disorders and won respect in a time when a firm hand was needed to steer the Church and the diocese amidst many perils.

In his intercourse with his clergy his natural quickness and occasional abruptness of manner might at times have worn the appearance of harshness, but it was chiefly on the surface ; underneath was a heart always warm with feelings not only of kindness but even of tenderness. This was of course most observable in his intercourse with his family and friends, but it could also be borne witness to by those of his clergy who had his confidence and deserved his esteem. Where reprimand was needed it was unhesitatingly given ; the Bishop's own standard of duty was high, and he was not satisfied with a low measure of it in others ; hence the stern rebuke and the authoritative counsel. But if he found a clergyman erring more through weakness than wilfulness, any momentary severity would be succeeded by the kindest feelings, and words of reproof were not unfrequently accompanied by substantial acts

of sympathy. But wherever in the diocese any clergyman was known by the Bishop to be devoted to his work, this always formed a bond of union, and the intercourse between them was always of the most friendly kind. The Bishop's constitutional reserve was laid aside, everything was open, sympathizing, and genial; and the dull routine of business was often enlivened by a vein of innocent and pleasant humour. The following extracts from communications kindly made to the writer by Canon Dale and Canon Champneys will bear out these remarks. The first is from Canon Dale. After giving a brief review of the work in St. Pancras, at which he himself had so zealously laboured, and with such signal success, he thus proceeds:—

“I have entered into these details that I might the more fully illustrate the extent and character of the support which I invariably received at the hands of my revered and beloved Diocesan, in respect of that portion of my work in St. Pancras which was before the public. But how much could I tell, were it permitted, of my private and confidential intercourse with him. Most fully, most kindly, did he, on every occasion, redeem his pledge of entire confidence and undeviating support, placing before me, with his characteristic openness, every communication which had been made to him in disparagement of my labours or in disapproval of my plans, leaving to me the responsibility of furnishing material for the reply, or giving me the opportunity, in his presence, of confronting and answering the objector; consulting my wishes on that part of the patronage of churches in St. Pancras which was exclusively his own, assigning confidentially the reasons which prevented

him (it was but one single instance) from accepting my recommendation, while rendering full justice to the active and exemplary clergyman who was the object, and to whom, at my instance, he did subsequently offer an incumbency almost equally desirable. There is, however, one most generous and kindly act of his, which bound me to him more than any other. By the premature decease of a most faithful and efficient clergyman, in 1852, a very important district, immediately contiguous to St. Pancras, was placed at the disposal of the Bishop. With the view of communicating to it a more strictly parochial character, I asked him to give it to my senior curate, a gentleman of experience and ability, well fitted for the charge. He replied that he had already made up his mind to a clergyman fully qualified and highly recommended. I wrote a second time, expressing my regret that I had asked what he could not grant, and adding 'that it would be a relief to my mind if he would allow me to believe that the selection was made on his own personal knowledge of the individual, and not on the recommendation of another.' No words but his own can do justice to the dignified kindness of his reply. 'I think it so important that the incumbent of ——— should possess your full confidence, and you are so well entitled to consideration in that matter, that I have made up my mind to forego the intention announced to you in my yesterday's letter, and to offer the incumbency to Mr. ———. I wish the appointment to be considered as much *yours* as *mine*, and I will thank you to be the medium of conveying the offer.' "

Canon Champneys writes :—

" It was a source of pleasure to me to believe that in my endeavour to discharge the duties of a parish clergyman of the Church of England, I had the Bishop's

sympathies, as I always had his wise advice and kind assistance. I can only speak, of course, of what he was to me ; but it is simple justice to his memory to say, that on one or two occasions, when my judgment and conscientious conviction as to the course which I ought to follow were at variance with his own, and when I felt it my duty frankly and fully to state my reasons for differing and for not changing my intended course, he was always good enough to recognise and acknowledge the frankness and openness which I used towards him, and most readily believed that my respect for himself, and regard to his opinion as my Bishop, was entirely compatible with my differing from him as a man. You can at once understand how I should be naturally on the alert, after such expression of difference, to observe whether it had wrought any change in his demeanour ; but I was met the next time with the same kindness, listened to with the same fixed and earnest attention with which he applied his powerful and practical mind to the various and manifold matters submitted to his judgment ; and whenever I brought before him a case of need connected with any of his clergy (I did so in several instances), I never failed to meet a ready and a liberal response. His help was bestowed not grudgingly or of necessity—he was ‘a cheerful giver,’ and gave in such a way as to make one sure that a feeling heart directed the open and liberal hand. I must add, that in all my intercourse with the Bishop, I found a singular combination of firmness and consideration ; and when he did give way, as he felt it sometimes his duty to do, I observed that in his subsequent intercourse with those whose conscientious adherence to what they felt to be right and good, was the cause of his yielding, he never showed any traces, at least to my observation, of unkind or petty remembrance.”

The writer is also indebted to Canon Champneys for the following curious testimony to Bishop Blomfield's impartiality in dealing with his clergy :—

“I was dining one day with the late Mr. Samuel Gurney. After dinner, he said to me, ‘Friend Champneys, shall I tell thee what I think is the duty of a bishop of thy Church?’ I said that I should be glad to hear it. ‘The duty of a bishop of thy Church, friend, is, as *I* think, to draw two lines, and place these as far as he can conscientiously place them from one another; then to place between these two lines as many of his clergy as he can; and then to deal with those between the lines with fair and equal hand. And shall I tell thee, friend Champneys, what I think of thy Bishop? I have never seen thy Bishop do what I consider is inconsistent with what *I* call a good man. Thou understandest, friend Champneys, what I mean by a *good* man.’”

It is almost needless to say that when the oracle of Lombard Street pronounced of the Bishop that he was “a good man,” he meant a just man, one who would render to every one his due. There was a natural justice in Bishop Blomfield's character which shrank instinctively from unfairness towards others. Though himself, by education and conviction, a decided High Churchman, and firmly attached to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, he had no insular prejudices to prevent his seeing the merits of other Christian bodies. The annexed letters—one illustrating his interest in the Greek Church, the other his friendly feeling towards the Protestants of France—will show that, without laying claim to views of indiscriminating

comprehensiveness, he could sympathize with communions widely differing from his own.

*To the Rev. Dr. Robertson.*

“LONDON, Dec. 11, 1833.

“I have suffered your valuable and interesting letter to remain unanswered much longer than I intended. You will be so good as to impute the delay to the multiplicity and variety of my official engagements.

I have mentioned the principal subject of your letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury ; and I am directed by his Grace to request that you will take an opportunity of conveying to the leading bishops of the Greek Church, with whom you may be acquainted, an expression of his paternal regard for them, and of his sympathy with them under the trials to which their Church has been subjected. In these sentiments I am desirous of declaring my hearty concurrence ; and I doubt not but that others of our brethren in this country are most ready to join their good wishes and their prayers to ours.

I am concerned to hear that there is so great a scarcity of books in Greece, especially of those which are most important and interesting to the theological inquirer. I hope that before long I shall have it in my power to inform you, that a selection of the writings of the early Fathers of the Church is sent out, as a testimony of our good-will to our brethren in Greece. Editions of some of those writings are in preparation at Oxford, in a more portable and convenient form than that in which they have hitherto appeared. There has been for the last few years so great a demand for the works of the early Fathers, that it is not easy to procure them, except at very high prices.

I beg to thank you for the books which you were so good as to send me. The editions of Plato and

Xenophon are very neatly printed. Pray tell the Bishop of Athens that I have read his speech with pleasure."

*To the Rev. Horace Monod.*

"LONDON, Dec. 18, 1839.

"REV. SIR,—I have had the pleasure of receiving your letter, inquiring of me, on the part of the Reverend Consistory of the Reformed Church at Marseilles, whether I know any likely means of furnishing an honourable subsistence to M. —, in case he should come to England.

Interested as I am in his case, as related by you, I am obliged reluctantly to inform you, that I see no probability of his obtaining a livelihood in this country. We could not employ him as a minister of religion, and we have more teachers of modern languages in England than can procure a decent maintenance. I have, at the present time, a foreign clergyman who has renounced the errors of the Church of Rome, and who, finding it impossible to subsist here, is going to America; and I am of opinion that M. — would have a better chance of employment in that country than he would have in England.

We have no fund out of which we could provide for the maintenance of clergymen who have left the Church of Rome. It has been more than once proposed that such a fund should be formed, but there is an objection to holding out to the Roman Catholic priests any inducement of a secular kind to quit the communion of their Church."

Within the Church of England, Bishop Blomfield thoroughly understood and accepted the comprehensive character which circumstances had stamped upon her. He did not look upon this as the result of a dishonest



compromise, but as a wise and Christian liberality, which, as he once observed in the House of Lords, had made our Church more tolerant in practice than it was in theory. His whole conduct as a Bishop was regulated on this principle. He was no party man: his wise and liberal mind, and his Christian charity, made him shrink from the views of party, and raised him above its prejudices; and the result was, that he gave satisfaction to neither extreme, but was thwarted, if not misrepresented, by both. Each complained that he had not gone further in their own direction, and accused him of inconsistency for having stopped short. But these attacks never altered his determination to deal with his clergy as impartially as under the circumstances was possible. He numbered friends among the Evangelical section as well as among High Churchmen, and in the bestowal of patronage he avoided the fault, more dangerous to the Church's welfare even than nepotism, of filling up all nominations with men of one faction. He had one great test of promotion, ministerial usefulness, and he always took into account the peculiar circumstances of the vacant benefice, so that his appointments were often filled by men who differed from him in many of their opinions. The bestowal of his patronage always gave him much and anxious thought, and it will be generally admitted, that this important part of a Bishop's duties was, on the whole, most faithfully and wisely discharged by him.

It deserves also to be noticed, that Bishop Blomfield was not one of those who forget or desert old friends. The friends of his youth were those of his age: and the interest he continued to take in those to whom he had

ever stood in any intimate relation may be seen from the following letter, written to one whom he had known many years before, on the occasion of a domestic affliction.

"LONDON HOUSE, *March 21, 1838.*

"MY DEAR,——. The perusal of your letter has excited in me mingled emotions of sorrow and pleasure. I grieve that so interesting a child should have been taken from her parents, in whose happiness it is impossible for me not to feel an interest ; but I find great cause for thankfulness, in being able to cherish a hope that this infliction from the hand of your heavenly Father may be the means of awakening you to a sense of the more unhappy condition in which you would have been, had nothing occurred to force some serious reflections upon your mind. You must excuse me, my dear ——, if on such an occasion I speak plainly : I would not heedlessly wound your feelings at a moment when they are softened, I trust, by severe affliction ; but I should not act the part of a friend, if I did not acknowledge that the statements which have reached my ears, respecting the transactions to which I suppose you allude, have caused me the deepest concern.

At one time I had nearly made up my mind to write to you, in a strain which perhaps would not have pleased you ; and it was the apprehension that in that case no good would be done by my interference, which made me lay aside the design. The subject was one, in speaking of which my conscience would not have permitted me to compromise the truth, nor to employ language such as you have probably been accustomed to hear. I am now spared the painful necessity of doing that act of duty : yet even now I cannot do otherwise than earnestly intreat you to seek for the grace of repentance, for sins which, however deep their dye, are atoned for (if sin-

cerely lamented and resolutely forsaken) by One who is ready to receive every true penitent.

But, indeed, my dear —, you have much to do to recover what you have lost. The world's estimation is not that about which a Christian need be very solicitous : but even that, independently of higher considerations, is too valuable to be lost without regret ; and if you knew to what an extent you have forfeited it, you would find in it an additional motive to encourage and improve the good resolutions which God, I trust, in His mercy, has put into your heart. Forgive the freedom with which I write. The relation in which I once stood to you justifies it ; and I do hope you will regard it as an evidence of the sincere interest which I take in your real welfare and the happiness of poor —, who has suffered so much, and so variously. Be assured that I shall earnestly pray, that you may turn to good account the lesson which God is pleased to teach you, and that you may yet have many years to live of virtue and usefulness, and if so of happiness. . . .”

But it was not only to old and intimate friends that sympathy was extended : Bishop Blomfield's nature was too warm and unselfish, not to feel for all in distress. Many of his clergy could bear witness that in the hour of some domestic sorrow a kind message of condolence would be sent by their Bishop—a letter of few words, because written amidst the most pressing engagements, but these words full of simple and devout consolation, the genuine utterances of a feeling and Christian heart.

Absence of jealousy was another characteristic of his feelings towards others : he was entirely free from this vice of little minds. And connected with this was his

thorough appreciation of good in others, even where they differed from himself, of which the following instance may be given. There were no two prelates on the Bench in Bishop Blomfield's time who differed more widely both in theory and practice, in their administration of a diocese, than he did from Bishop Stanley of Norwich. And yet amidst all these differences, and though occasionally arrayed against each other, these two men heartily appreciated each other's character and work. Bishop Stanley used to say that he was better understood by the Bishop of London than by any other of the bishops ; and afterwards, when he was gathered to his rest, the good work he had done in Norwich called forth from Bishop Blomfield expressions of the warmest admiration and of regret that that work had not been sufficiently appreciated.

Mention has already been made of Bishop Blomfield's life at Fulham. There are many of its inhabitants who came into contact with him as neighbours who can bear witness to his unfailing kindness and consideration for others. In the tower of Fulham Church there is a tablet, erected by the parishioners after his death, which bears the following inscription:—"To the memory of the Right Rev. Charles James Blomfield, D.D. late Bishop of London. This monument is erected by his personal friends and neighbours, long resident in this parish, as a tribute of their admiration of his abilities, his munificence, and his kindness ; and with a grateful estimate of the manner in which they were all devoted, during a period of twenty-nine years, to advance the welfare and to relieve the distress of all around him here."

In the sermons preached, after his death, by the excellent Vicar of Fulham, the Rev. R. G. Baker, for whom the Bishop had long and deservedly felt the truest esteem and affection, the following passage will illustrate the Bishop's kindly and generous feelings :—

“I might tell you with what an ample liberality he originated or supported all our local institutions for charitable or religious objects, how he fostered them by his patronage, and counselled, with a most ready and accessible kindness, those to whom he had commended the charge of them. And whenever on such occasions pecuniary assistance was required, it was given, as I can testify from a long and grateful experience, like that commended by St. Paul in the churches of Macedonia, it was literally ‘praying us, with much intreaty, that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the Saints.’ It was the large and overflowing generosity of one who never wished to be asked to give.”

And in a private communication the Vicar of Fulham adds the following remarks :—

“I had the most constant opportunities of admiring not only the large generosity of his disposition, often anticipating and always ready to meet the demands made upon him ; but, also, the wise and intelligent discrimination with which he met them, never inquiring too narrowly into the causes, when he could be assured of the reality of the distress brought before him, but always best pleased when he could help those who were making the greatest exertions to help themselves. The world at large, always scrutinizing, and too often commenting unkindly upon the amount of his confessedly ample income, little knew—and never will

know—through what numberless streams it flowed away from him as soon as he received it, nor how many thankful hearts were gladdened by the distribution of it.”

In every work, indeed, for the improvement of Fulham, the Bishop took the liveliest interest. But, perhaps, his residence there was most valued for the many opportunities it gave the parishioners of hearing at his mouth the Word of God. It was his custom to preach in the parish church on alternate Sundays whenever he was not prevented by other engagements, just as when in town he was a frequent preacher at his parish church of St. James's.

It may seem almost needless to add, that Bishop Blomfield with his affectionate and tender nature was the kindest of husbands and fathers. To one who had shared with him thirty-eight years of joys and trials, who had given herself with unwearied love to the task of aiding and comforting him amidst his incessant toil, and through the long months of his last illness never left his side, he might well be, what indeed he was, a most affectionate, considerate, and devoted husband. Of his feelings as a father, a letter to his eldest son, on his first going to Oxford, may serve as a specimen :—

“FULHAM, Oct. 21, 1841.

“MY DEAREST ——. I am glad to learn from ———’s account that you are comfortable and at your ease in your new position ; although I am afraid you will be unsettled for some time as to rooms.

I hope you will *at once* and from the first begin a systematic plan of reading, laying down for yourself certain rules as to time, subjects, &c. from which

nothing should induce you to deviate. I do not wish you to labour *intensely*; but I do hope that you will read *steadily* and *carefully*, and that, both on account of expense, and the loss of time, you will not keep a great deal of company. It is easy at any time to *enlarge* the circle of your visiting acquaintance, but scarcely possible to *contract* it when formed, and much company is quite incompatible with steady and effective reading. I wish you to bear in mind that you may possibly have to depend hereafter, principally if not entirely, upon your own exertions for a competent maintenance. If it should please God to take me from my family before I have had an opportunity of giving you preferment, it will not be in my power to leave you more than a very moderate sum of money, and not even that during the life of your dear mother. With respect to preferment, if I should be spared long enough to give you any, that must of course be, to a certain degree, dependent upon yourself. The better you acquit yourself at College, the less scruple I shall feel in providing for you, supposing that in other respects you are qualified to be a clergyman.

Let nothing, my dear —, lead you to neglect the performance of your religious duties, in which you will find your only sufficient safeguard against the dangers which will beset you. Avoid discussing questions which may be started in your presence concerning the peculiarities of what is called the Oxford School of Divinity; and keep clear of those who hold them, or at least of those who *talk* much about them."

His incessant engagements left him far less leisure than he and his family desired for domestic intercourse; and in his children's earlier years, he was compelled reluctantly to forego much of that frequent and familiar companionship which, more than anything else, endears

a father to his children, and inspires a mutual confidence invaluable in their after entrance on the temptations of the world. But this did not lessen his tender solicitude for their welfare. He left nothing undone that, in his circumstances, was possible for him to do. Their education was watched by him with an unfailing interest. As was natural, his own tastes gave a colouring to his children's studies; next to Scripture and theology, music and the classical languages taking the most prominent place, the elements of the last entering even into the course of education prescribed by him for his daughters. But his children derived instruction from his conversation as well as from books. His mind overflowed with knowledge, and sayings continually dropped from his lips which conveyed the information required, and forcibly impressed it on the memory.

The following, from the pen of one of his daughters, gives a simple and pleasing picture of Bishop Blomfield in his own home :—

“ One of my earliest recollections of my father is his teaching me Latin, when I was between five and six years old. A Latin lesson from a little girl of six must often have been trying to the patience of a scholar; but neither at that time, nor at any of the many lessons in Latin and Greek which he gave me in after years, do I recollect ever hearing from him one angry or impatient word. As I grew older, I learnt to reckon the hour, or half-hour, spent with him before breakfast as one of the happiest hours of the day. He used to take great pains in instructing his elder children, not only in Latin and Greek, but in a knowledge of the Scriptures, and of the doctrines and Articles of our Church. When we



were younger, we used to repeat the Catechism, and texts or passages of Scripture to him, on Sunday afternoon or evening. These seem little things to mention, but they show that, amid his many occupations and pressing cares as a ruler of the Church, he did not forget to order his children and his own household well. Indeed, my recollection of Fulham, as it was in those days, is that of a thoroughly well-ordered family. Regular and early hours, punctual attendance of the whole household at family prayers (when, either morning or evening, he generally read some Commentary on Scripture); cheerful evenings, enlivened with music, and by the society of friends; quiet, peaceful Sundays, when week-day books and work, and, as far as my father's example had influence, worldly thoughts and talk, were laid aside—Sundays so spent, so distinguished from other days, that the first thought that came naturally to one's mind, on awaking, was, 'This is the Lord's Day;' pleasant hours spent in the garden, in which he took such pride and delight; these and many other such quiet domestic pictures, in which he, with his bright, loving look and kind words, is ever the central figure, rise before me when I try to recall him to my mind as he was in his own home, among his elder children. I see him, in the early summer morning, or after returning from town in the afternoon, walking, with his quick firm step, through the garden, stopping now and then to lop off a straggling bough, or to bid us admire some favourite tree or shrub. Then I picture him to myself presiding at a school-feast on the lawn, or examining the children of the parish schools with as much care and attention as if he had nothing else to think of. Or, I remember him in the enjoyment of some autumnal excursion, full of fun and cheerfulness, and enjoying the scenery more than any of us. Then I see him, the centre of a large Christmas party of friends

and relations, kind and affectionate to all, joining in the Christmas carol, or laughing heartily at the various diversions of the younger members of the party. A contrast all this to the stir and bustle, the work and anxiety, of his 'out of door' life—but a true picture of him as he appeared to us. He was always, in those days, able to throw aside his cares and the thought of his work during the time he spent with his family; and, by entering into our occupations and amusements, as well as by conversation, music, and reading the current literature of the day, to make it a time of real refreshment to himself, as well as of pleasure and profit to us.

Although he spoke but little, if at all, of himself, he often talked of Church affairs, and other questions of general interest; and we learnt from him, and from his conversation with those about him, to be thoroughly interested in the great religious and social questions of the day—the extension of the Church, the progress of education, the state of the poor, &c. Such matters as these we learnt to look upon as those which should chiefly interest us, and in which we should be prepared to take our part when the time and opportunity should come."

But there was a charm about Bishop Blomfield's intercourse with his family and friends which it is not easy to describe, and still less easy to illustrate. An affectionate tenderness, in a nature so strong and manly; the consideration for the weak and ignorant, in one of such mental vigour and knowledge; the thoughtfulness for the smallest wants of those near and dear to him, even at times when the needs and perils of the Church weighed upon his soul; the forgetfulness of self, the freedom from egotism, and the unfeigned humility of

one who occupied so conspicuous a position among the Churchmen of his time—all these, and kindred qualities, scarcely known to the world, have endeared the memory of Bishop Blomfield to his familiar friends with a reverence far deeper and more sacred than can be stirred by the recollection of his abilities, his labours, or his zeal. Nor, perhaps, can it be expected that the world should believe in qualities hidden under a reserve of temperament, a quickness of manner, and a decided, if conscientious, assertion of authority, which concealed his real nature from the eyes of the multitude. To some, perhaps, who remember Bishop Blomfield in the days of his greatest vigour, when he used his influence disinterestedly for the public good, yet at times with a positiveness natural in a man of ability and ardent temperament, it may seem almost a paradox to say that he was really one of the humblest of men. No doubt he liked power, as all men like it, but he used it only for the good which he was able to effect by it; and his ambition was wholly free from artifice and scheming. A clergyman, who had sought preferment in many quarters and had failed, once said to him, “I never got anything I asked for.” “And I,” replied the Bishop, with characteristic quickness, “never asked for anything I got.” He obtained advancement without an effort, because God’s Providence placed it in his way. If he had that consciousness of power which is compatible with the truest humility, he had none of the pettiness of vanity; and his temptations to pride were more than counterbalanced, at least in the latter half of his life, by the opposition, misrepresentation and trials which he had to endure. He shrunk from the egotism which delights

in a morbid self-consciousness. Of the few remarks on his own feelings recorded in his diaries, most were written in cipher, which he thought none could interpret, and which, therefore, are the genuine utterances of his heart. They all breathe the same spirit of self-abasement, the confessions of unworthiness and of shortcomings, and prayers for grace; the "Deus misereatur" of one who knew that, amid all the honour and influence of office, he was still a sinner, and had more need than those beneath him to "walk humbly with his God." "The last thing he gave me," writes an old and intimate friend, "was a Greek Testament, which he told me he had constantly used, and in which, on the fly-leaf, instead of his name, he had written simply *δούλου ἀχρήστου* in exquisitely neat characters. The words exactly express the view which he always seemed to me to entertain of himself." The same forgetfulness of self characterised his conversation. "What *I* have done," was a thought which seemed never to enter his mind. During the nearly two years' illness which preceded his death, in the many conversations which he held with members of his family on Church matters, once only did he allude to what he had himself done for the Church, and then only to express a humble trust that God had been pleased to make him the instrument of effecting some good. His family hoped, during his illness, to have obtained some account from the lips of their father of his own life, which might form the basis of a posthumous memoir: but, after one or two short conversations, he perceived their object, and declined to proceed further. He seemed to shrink instinctively from speaking of himself.

Mention has already been made of Bishop Blomfield's readiness to forgive injuries. He had not the power to retain feelings of unkindness towards those—and there were too many—who spoke evil of him and ill-used him. And yet his nature was most sensitive ; he felt unkind or unjust treatment most acutely. Like most public men, he had indeed become comparatively indifferent to the attacks of those at whose hands he had no reason to look for kindly treatment. Perhaps no man was ever less moved by such attacks to turn aside even a hair's breadth from the path of duty. But unkind and ungenerous dealing on the part of those members of the Church whose sympathy, or at least forbearance, might have been expected, caused him the deepest pain, and helped, as much as anything, to weigh him down in his declining years, and to hasten the natural decay of his powers. But no word of resentment escaped his lips. Divine grace had changed the man who had begun life with so much natural quickness and impetuous energy. Always, from the first, generous and forgiving, he had thus, before the end, become also patient and meek.

Another leading characteristic of Bishop Blomfield, already hinted at, was his thorough honesty. Single-mindedness, that most rare of virtues, was a part of his nature ; the temptations of his elevated position could never destroy this simplicity. His reserve, which was great, and on some points excessive, was not an artifice for hiding his real meaning and covering his designs ; it was partly the result of shyness, partly a shrinking from the unreality of saying more than he felt, and also the natural habit of a mind much occupied with its own thoughts, and too busy to communicate freely with

others. But there was no want of openness ; you felt that every word bore the seal of truthfulness, and every action of sincerity. No doubt this was one great secret of his influence. When Bishop Blomfield rose in his place in the House of Lords, the whole assembly, even to the attendants, took up a listening attitude. It was because they knew nothing would be spoken for rhetorical effect, from personal motives, or for party ends—that all would be the genuine utterance of a man as single and honest in his intentions as he was unaffected in his gesture and diction. It was the same with his preaching and his speeches at religious meetings. Men felt that he spoke always from the heart, and they listened with a reverence, and bore away a practical remembrance not always accorded to far more brilliant orators.

This honesty of character, this singleness of motive, pervaded all his actions. And the source of this and his other virtues is to be traced not merely to natural temperament, but to the Divine grace which had enabled him to rise above worldly motives and aims into a higher region of thought and purpose. The lesson which his example was ever teaching to those, who had a heart to receive it, was a lesson of thorough unselfishness, the living for nobler than personal ends. Such was his whole life from the hour when he entered on the episcopal office. He rose from the first to the full height of its great responsibilities, and abandoned at once and for ever those pursuits in which he had found his earlier fame and his chief delight. As Rector of Bishopsgate he had not yet been compelled to relinquish his classical labours ; his diary is filled with notices of critical works, English and foreign, which

he found time to read ; but after the date of his elevation to the See of Chester such entries cease altogether : he tore himself by one strong effort from his former mode of life, and turned from criticism and literature to the work of the Church. Such cases were not common. Most of the scholars who had been promoted to the Bench, however exemplary in their new office, remained more or less scholars to the end ;—not so Bishop Blomfield. Who that knew him only as the leading prelate of his time would have suspected that for the first half of his life he had been famous in another and a very different line ? And it is rarely, indeed, that a man who has been eminent in literary criticism, and has spent years in investigating the minutæ of a dead language, can display such a power of dealing with living realities, and exhibit statesmanlike views, knowledge of affairs, and administrative ability, as though he had been trained to these things from earliest years. Much of this, no doubt, was to be attributed to natural force of character and strength of will ; but it proved also how that will was sanctified by devotion to Christ, and by a deep conviction of the sacredness of duty. Duty was a name stamped upon his mind from the earliest years ; duty, not as the grudging service of a cold and selfish nature, but as the ready sacrifice of a noble spirit and a loving heart.

Bishop Blomfield's piety had little in it that was emotional and impulsive, but it had also nothing superficial. It did not arrest attention by showy qualities ; did not seek to kindle either its own or another's fire by excitement ; did not even make itself known in religious talk. But one who knew him well says of

him, with great truth, "Although Bishop Blomfield did not often speak of his own religious feelings, yet he knew well how to give consolation to others, and to point out the power of religious principles in distress. If I may speak from my own experience, no one could minister counsel and comfort more feelingly, or give a more intense conviction of reality." If the Bishop's piety was undemonstrative, it was all the more deep and calm and strong. It bore him along in one steadfast, uniform tide of religious principle, from his early childhood to the day of his death; made him ride safely through temptations under which more impulsive natures might have sunk; and strengthened him both to do and to bear with a uniform zeal and patience which never flagged even under the burden of sickness, disappointment, and sorrow. Those who are not satisfied without the revelations of religious experience and the continual utterance of devotional feelings, may be disappointed at so few pious sayings of Bishop Blomfield being recorded in this memoir, and might be disposed on that account to question his claims to holiness. But a far different verdict will be passed by those who judge of a tree by its fruits. Of one who for so many years of life had unselfishly given himself to the good of others, "very gladly spent and was spent," had been "in labours abundant," "in weariness and painfulness," for the cause of Christ's Church, and "in reproaches for Christ's sake;" one who in the eyes of those who knew him best was uniformly considerate, forgiving, humble, and sincere; one who in the long months of his last illness cast himself with the affecting simplicity of a childlike



spirit on the mercy of God in Jesus Christ ;—of such an one few will venture to doubt what was the secret of his strength, or that he who was known to the world as the energetic man of business, and the able prelate, was in the secret recesses of his innermost life the devout Christian and the accepted servant of God.

Such was Bishop Blomfield as he appeared, not so much to the world, as to those who knew him longest and best. During the first half of his life he had experienced little of men's adverse judgments, and seemed to have reached this world's measure of felicity,

ὁ δ' ἑλβιος, ὅν  
φᾶμαι κατέχοντ' ἀγαθαί.

In the latter half he had to learn a different lesson, and in common with many conscientious public men was often misunderstood and misjudged. In the remaining chapters we have to accompany him in the two years of his last illness, during which he was kept "secretly from the strife of tongues," till he passed beyond the reach of human praise and censure, into the presence of Him who alone can pass a just judgment on the lives and characters of men.

## CHAPTER XI.

AFFECTION OF THE EYE-SIGHT IN 1855—PARALYTIC SEIZURE—PROGRESS OF HIS ILLNESS—PROPOSAL TO RESIGN HIS SEE—DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY—BILL INTRODUCED INTO PARLIAMENT—STRONGLY OPPOSED—BUT PASSED—HIS RESIGNATION IN 1856—ADDRESSES ON THE OCCASION.

WE now return to the narrative of the closing years of Bishop Blomfield's life. Early in 1855 he had suffered so much from weakness of the eyes, that his medical men recommended him to seek change of air and fresh advice on the Continent. The sight of his right eye had been partially affected as long ago as 1847, after the accident which had happened to him at Osborne: and he himself attributed an increased weakness of sight to a cold caught while attending the funeral of the Duke of Wellington, at St. Paul's Cathedral, in November, 1852. Those who were present at that ceremonial may recollect that, owing to some mistake or misinformation, the Bishop and the cathedral clergy were seen moving towards the great west door to meet the funeral procession, some considerable time before it actually arrived: and it was while standing bare-headed at the open door, with the keen November wind beating full upon his face, that the Bishop fancied he had caught the cold which had left its effects behind it in impaired eyesight. Be this as it may, he found his sight so much worse in 1855, that he followed the advice of his friends,

and spent the greater part of his summer vacation at Gräfrath, near Dusseldorf, where the eminent oculist, Dr. Leuw (better known by his title of "the Hofrath"), was attracting yearly crowds of patients of all nations.

The Bishop writes from this place :—

"The Hofrath seems to have some hope of restoring the sight of my right eye : but I am not sanguine about it. I shall be content, if by God's blessing he can so far strengthen it as to remove, or diminish, the sympathetic weakness of the left eye. . . . One part of his advice I fear it will not be possible for me to follow. I am not to fatigue myself, nor to be *nervous*. This depends much more upon others than myself. . . . The Hofrath has been exceedingly kind and attentive to me, and sees me more frequently and regularly than any of his patients. It is rather painful to see so many goggle eyes, and red eyes, and white eyes, and green shades, and blue shades, waiting in the narrow vestibule of the hotel, for their turn of admission to the Hofrath's room. Not unfrequently many of them have to wait a whole day without seeing him."

These summer vacations on the Continent, or among the lakes of England or Scotland, had always been among the brightest spots in the Bishop's life. On these occasions he always left business as much as possible behind him, and gave up the greater part of his time to the quiet pleasures of a country life, or the varied sensations of travelling. His pleasure in travelling was especially great. It was not that he mixed very much with those among whom he travelled ; for though he could speak French fluently, his natural reserve prevented his becoming familiar with foreigners. But he seemed to take delight in change of place, in the novel-

ties and even the inconveniences which belong to foreign travel, and, above all, in the charms of grand natural scenery. In a beautiful country he would stand up in the carriage, and express himself in the strongest terms of admiration ; and would seem disappointed if any of his companions did not seem to share his enthusiasm, turning now to one and now to another, and asking, " —, or —, don't you admire this view?" He would spend the evenings or vacant hours of travel in turning the incidents of the day into verses, which served in his family as humorous memorials of his annual holidays.

On this last occasion of visiting the Continent the Bishop took a short tour as usual after his stay at Gräfrath, reaching as far as Lucerne and the Swiss Freiburg. On his return to England, early in October, somewhat benefited by Dr. Leuw's treatment, he began to resume his ordinary avocations, without any symptoms of an approaching crisis in his health. This, however, did not last long. On Sunday, October 21st, he notes in his diary that he preached at Fulham Church : and this was the last entry that he ever made. The same night he was seized with an attack of a paralytic nature, which left him helpless and unable to move, the whole of the left side being affected. At first it was thought by his friends and physicians that he might throw off the effects of this attack in a few weeks, and be able to resume business ; meantime, the affairs of the diocese were delegated, as far as possible, to the two Archdeacons of London and Middlesex.

But it soon became evident, that if he were to recover his strength at all, it would not be for a much longer

period than had been anticipated at first. At the age of sixty-nine, after a life of great, and sometimes of excessive labour, and with a constitution which, naturally of not more than average strength, had been weakened in early life by over-study, he possessed none of the elasticity with which a younger or a less over-worked man might have rallied from such an attack. The weeks went by, and though he did not seem to grow worse, it became more and more evident that his work in this world was done, and that what yet remained to him of life must be passed in repose, even if it were not destined to be passed in debility and suffering. His mental powers, indeed, were at first little impaired: but there was this difference between his present attack and the illnesses from which he had suffered from time to time before, that whereas in them his mind soon reverted to the occupations in which he had recently been engaged, and the difficulties which he had lately had to meet; now he seemed to have laid aside the works which had most occupied his time and thoughts; and though he would converse freely on the prospects and interests of the Church, when these subjects were started by others, he did not seem to rest upon them of his own accord. On the contrary, his mind, during the whole of his last illness, was constantly travelling backward to the scenes and companions of his earliest days. He related anecdotes of his youth, which no one remembered to have heard from him before; he expressed a desire to learn particulars of persons and places which he had not been known to mention for years. He listened with apparent pleasure to music, and to readings from his favourite poets, Horace, Juvenal, Gray, and Pope; from Johnson's Lives

of the Poets, many of the writings of Lord Macaulay, South, and Jeremy Taylor, and other works, both serious and amusing. When in health, he had always preferred taking a volume in his own hand, and running through it with his quick eye, to hearing its contents read by another. Nor did his usual cheerfulness and playful humour altogether desert him at this time: indeed, during the early part of his illness, he would often break into those lively sallies with which he had always been accustomed to enliven his hours of leisure. At other times when suffering acute pain, as he often did, from neuralgia and other causes, he appeared depressed and almost overwhelmed, as was natural in one who had never before experienced any visitation of quite the same kind. It was during this illness that he often expressed more freely than had been his wont his own feelings of personal religion, and would declare his strong sense of his own demerits, and his unfeigned belief in the merits and intercession of Christ, as the ground on which he rested his hopes of salvation. On several occasions he said, that though his sufferings were great, they were not half what he deserved, and that he trusted God would forgive him for his Saviour's sake. Such words were sometimes accompanied with touching expressions of gratitude towards those nearest to him who ministered to his comfort.

Towards the close of 1855 he removed, by the advice of his physicians, to Hampstead, in hopes of benefiting by change of air. At Hampstead he spent Christmas Day. His position on that day could not but strike him forcibly, as it did those who were around him. Christmas Day had been a bright and joyous festival

to him. He had always spent it at Fulham; and his practice had been to preach and administer the Holy Communion at the parish church. After the services of the day, he would usually refresh his mind by reading some work of ancient or modern divinity on the subject of the Nativity; and in the evening he always had around him as many of the family as could conveniently reach him, together with the Vicar and his wife. Of all the happy family gatherings, none are looked back upon with more pleasure by his family, because on no occasion did they see the cheerful piety of the Bishop so happily combined with the display of his social affections.

It was a great change to spend such a festival on a sick bed away from home. But the only allusion he made to his condition was early in the morning, when he said, he had been thinking much of the Nativity; and had been reflecting what cause he had for thankfulness, when he compared his own comforts with the condition of the mother of his Lord, who, at a time when she required every comfort, had only a stable to lie in with her newborn infant. He then asked to have Milton's Hymn on the Nativity read to him.

In the course of the day the Holy Communion was administered to him by his old friend, Mr. Ainger, the Incumbent of Hampstead. He requested as many of his family as were within reach to receive it with him; expressing, at the same time, a hope that they would remain and spend the evening together, as he was anxious that his illness should interfere as little as possible with the usual family gathering.

Early in the following year he spent some time at

Brighton, in the house of his old friend Lord Bristol, which its excellent owner placed at his disposal. But neither of these changes appeared to do him any substantial good. He returned to Fulham in the same helpless condition in which he had left it, and seemed pleased to be once more in the old familiar scenes—in the rooms from which, as he reclined on his couch, he could look out upon Bishop Compton's cork-tree, or the church-tower rising between the trees, and the gardens which he knew so well, and round which he could still occasionally pass in his wheel-chair.

But the time had now come, when the pressing necessities of the diocese urged upon Bishop Blomfield and his friends the question—what permanent provision could be made for its superintendence, in the event, which now became almost a certainty, of his never being able again to resume his duties. A less active bishop might have been less missed; but even in that case, the Confirmations and other necessary episcopal functions could hardly continue to be performed by the aid of other bishops, without great inconvenience both to them and to the diocese. The instances of Bishop Law, Bishop Bathurst, and other prelates, were enough to show that episcopal incapacity, through age or infirmity, is one of the most serious evils under which a diocese can suffer. A layman, well acquainted with the diocese of Bath and Wells, said :—

“The system pursued in this diocese during the interregnum of Bishop Law's infirmities was to leave the affairs of each archdeaconry in the hands of the rural deans, generally speaking young and inexperienced clergymen, and between whom and their brethren in



the ministry, constant differences were arising. Unseemly disputes about Church-patronage became the subjects of general scandal; and although the Church of England in the populous city of Bath and the county of Somerset had been for a long series of years most popular, its popularity would, I believe, have been well-nigh lost had such a state of things continued."

All that could be proved on this point from the examples of Norwich, or Bath and Wells, applied with double force to the case of London.

Archdeacon Hale, in a charge delivered to the clergy of his Archdeaconry in April, 1856, suggested that such cases might be met by the expedients of Titular or Suffragan bishops (now more generally termed *coadjutors*); a class which had existed continuously in most English dioceses up to the Reformation, and which was recognised by a statute of Henry VIII., still unrepealed. Speaking of the opinion of Bishop Blomfield on this point, the Archdeacon said: "He will recognise, in all that I have now said, no other suggestions than those which, twenty years ago, I submitted to his consideration, when accompanying him, as was then my duty, in a long round of Confirmations,—which to many others would have been a labour, but to him was one continued course of thankful exertion easily borne,—I pressed upon him the necessity of reviving the order of Suffragans; because I knew, that if the labour of parochial confirmations were annually performed, it would surpass the strength of an unaided diocesan. His reply was as characteristic as it was prophetic:—'I do not agree with you now—I may do so when I am threescore.'"

But there were difficulties in the way of settling the question by the appointment of a coadjutor, which could not be overcome. A course not less unusual was the only one which remained—a resignation of the see. To this course the minds of Bishop Blomfield and his friends began to be turned, when the spring of 1856 found him still as far as ever from any prospect of restoration to health and strength; and as his episcopate had not been one of the least remarkable in the history of the English Church, so its close was destined to be surrounded by circumstances of a novel and peculiar character.

In a Church so much mixed up with the State as ours—a Church, as Bishop Blomfield once said, in some respects hampered by its relations to the State—such a question as the resignation of a Bishop was, or seemed to be, full of no inconsiderable difficulties. That which would be easy in an un-Established Church, such as that of Scotland, and which had actually been done in the case of our own Church in the Colonies, became complicated by the fact that the English Bishops are also Peers of Parliament; and though a Bishop might resign his spiritual functions, could he, it was asked, denude himself of his privileges as a Peer?

Again, we are much guided in England by precedent; and here history seemed to be against the proposed step: for it appeared that there was no actual precedent for an episcopal resignation. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Archbishop Grindall had wished to resign his office; but he had died Archbishop of Canterbury. In 1761 Bishop Pearce, of Rochester, expressed a desire to resign; and his desire, and the circumstances which

prevented its being fulfilled, are worth recording, as showing the change in the character of the English Episcopate which has been effected in the course of a century. From Bishop Pearce's Autobiography it appears that, before he had himself desired to resign, the more important see of London had been, for seven years, in exactly the condition in which it would have remained had Bishop Blomfield continued to hold his office without recovering his health :—

“In the latter end of the year 1761” (writes Bishop Pearce) “died Dr. Sherlock, Bishop of London; and upon his death, Lord Bath spoke to the Bishop of Rochester, and offered to use his endeavours with his Majesty for appointing the Bishop of Rochester to succeed him. Many thought that he (Dr. Pearce) had long had a view to that eminent see: as he had, for seven years before that prelate's death, ordained all candidates for holy orders in his diocese, and done other business for him who, through age and bodily infirmities, was wholly disabled to do most parts of his office in person.”

Failing, however, to obtain the see of London, Bishop Pearce next desired to resign his own see, and the deanery of Westminster, which he held with it. The question was brought before George III. by the Bishop's friend, Lord Bath, who, though he had retired from office before the death of George II., still retained considerable influence over the mind and in the councils of the new Sovereign. The King offered no opposition to the resignation. After the lapse of two months he sent for the Bishop, and told him that he had consulted with two of his lawyers; that one of them, Lord Mansfield,

saw no objection to the resignation of the bishopric and deanery, while the chancellor, Lord Northington, had seemed doubtful about the practicability of the scheme ; but that, upon further consideration, he too had expressed an opinion that the Bishop's request might be complied with. The Bishop, accordingly, tendered his resignation to the King in person, and considered the matter settled. Unfortunately, however, his friend Lord Bath, hearing that the resignation had been accepted, immediately went to the King, with a request that Dr. Pearce's bishopric and deanery might be given to Dr. Newton, Bishop of Bristol. This alarmed the Ministry, as an infringement of their own prerogative in the disposal of Church-patronage ; and, as the shortest way of defeating Lord Bath, they determined to oppose the resignation of Bishop Pearce. Lord Northington, who had been so doubtful, and then had overcome his doubts, was now instructed to inform the King that he was doubtful again, and that the Bishops generally disliked the design ; and the King, sending again for the Bishop of Rochester, told him that he must think no more about resigning the bishopric, but that he would have all the merit of having done so.

But, whatever might be the difficulties which seemed to beset a bishop desiring to resign his see, there is proverbially nothing, or almost nothing, which cannot be effected by an Act of Parliament. Accordingly, it was determined that the sanction of the Legislature should be sought for the step which Bishop Blomfield proposed to take. It might, indeed, have been wished that the question should be settled by a general measure, placing the Bishops on the same footing with regard to

resignation as the Judges, rather than that each case, as it occurred, should be left to be dealt with by *toties quoties* legislation. But the exigencies of the Diocese of London could not admit of the delay which was almost sure to be occasioned by the introduction of a general measure ; and Bishop Blomfield was compelled to provide for his own case in the most speedy manner possible. He addressed a letter to Lord Palmerston, stating that, owing to continued illness, he was desirous, if allowed by law, to resign the bishopric of London, if secured, during his life, a clear annuity of £6,000 a year. This sum, rather less than one-third of the income which he was then enjoying, was required in order to enable him to continue the life-insurances which constituted almost the sole provision that he had made for his family. Lord Palmerston expressed his readiness to carry out the Bishop's views.

Bishop Blomfield was not, however, the only prelate who was desirous of resigning at this time. His old friend Bishop Maltby, who had occupied the see of Durham for twenty years, was in the same position. On a former occasion, when Bishop Maltby had objected to receive the diminished income which the arrangements of the Ecclesiastical Commission had fixed for the see of Durham on the death of Bishop Van Mildert, Bishop Blomfield, in allusion to Dr. Maltby's former classical labours, had remarked that, probably, he did not wish for *an abridgment of his Thesaurus*. Bishop Maltby had succeeded in retaining a larger income than that which the Commissioners designed for him ; but now, advanced years and increasing infirmities made him anxious to resign his duties, if allowed some provision for his

remaining days. Accordingly, he made to Lord Palmerston a proposition similar to that of Bishop Blomfield; and the Premier undertook to provide for the cases of both bishops in a single measure. A short bill, under the title of "The Bishops of London and Durham Retirement Bill"—securing to the two Bishops pensions respectively of £6,000 and £4,500 a year, and to Bishop Blomfield the use of the Fulham Estate during his lifetime—was prepared by the Government to be introduced into Parliament in the session now begun.

This bill did not pass either House as easily as might have been expected from its simplicity and obvious necessity. The advantages of passing it as it stood were thus sensibly summed up in an article which appeared in the *Daily News* while the question was pending :—

"That Bishops of the Church of England can resign their sees, is as certain as that a Rector can legally denude himself of his benefice. That, having resigned their sees, they cease to be Lords Spiritual of Parliament, is, we presume; a necessary consequence. There is, therefore, no legal difficulty to hinder the Bishop of London and the Bishop of Durham resigning. We have cases enough in point with East Indian and West Indian Bishops to settle that; and if ex-Indian or ex-Colonial Prelates can, after the resignation of their sees, perform episcopal functions in England, the demission of English sees by our Bishops would not, it may reasonably be inferred, affect the indelibility of the episcopal character and office in their persons. In seeking, then, to promote vacancies in the sees we have just mentioned, we do not seek in the least degree to degrade or to humiliate their present incumbents.

But we cannot expect Bishops to resign their sees, and to give up their handsome episcopal incomes, without any provision for their old age. After certain periods of service, we give our Judges, our Diplomats, our Lord Chancellors, and even our Ministers of State (when poor) retiring pensions; and though the income of the Bishops is not a burthen on the State, the same principle is equally applicable to their case, out of the revenues of the Church. If, for the advantage of the Church, they resign their sees, they are reasonably entitled to retiring stipends out of the funds of the Church which they thereby benefit. . . . Now, we have but to secure vacancies in the Sees of London and Durham, to procure for the Common Fund of the Ecclesiastical Commission an additional income of—to put it at a moderate figure—£25,000 a year;<sup>1</sup> and thus, ample means of giving the resigning Prelates sufficient retiring stipends would be found at once.

Well, then, here are Bishops said to be willing to resign their sees, and there is a fund to arise out of their resignation which would enable the State to provide them, out of the property of the Church, with retiring stipends. Why not, then, deal practically with these two practical facts? Why not at once introduce a measure to provide Bishops who do resign with pensions? The question, we shall be told, is a very complicated one. Nothing of the sort, we reply; it is a very simple one. Let us legislate for the case in hand—that is, for Bishops who will *voluntarily* resign, and not mix it up just now with the more general and, we will admit, really difficult subject, of Bishops who ought to but will not voluntarily resign. Let us legislate by degrees—first with the voluntary, then with

<sup>1</sup> The new incumbents of those sees being only entitled to diminished incomes.

the involuntary ; and who knows that, having provided properly for the case of voluntary resignation, we shall ever have to legislate for compulsory resignation ?

Conscientiousness, when accompanied by a sufficient competence, may do all we want, if we only give it the means. At all events, let us make the trial and put the matter to the proof."

These arguments, however, did not prevail with all parties. In the House of Commons, some Radical members, who knew nothing of the character and duties of the episcopal office, could perceive that the bill was intended to be of practical advantage to the Church ; and for this reason, they gave it a decided but desultory opposition. But this was not all. In his letter to Lord Palmerston, Bishop Blomfield had used such expressions with regard to the retiring pension which he expected, as to lay himself open to the charge of that mysterious ecclesiastical offence known as simony ; and for this reason, among others, the bill was opposed, not only by Mr. Hadfield, Mr. Roebuck, and others of the same school, but also by such Churchmen as Mr. Gladstone, the Bishop of Oxford, and Sir William Heathcote.

In the House of Lords, the bill was introduced and its provisions defended by the Chancellor, Lord Cranworth, who had been the schoolfellow of Bishop Blomfield at Bury. He said that the Bishop of London, "with whom it had been his good fortune to be acquainted from his earliest years, had discharged his high duties with a singleness of purpose, with a disinterested desire to benefit those who were placed under his care, rarely equalled and never surpassed. It was impossible



that every act of that right-reverend prelate, during his long tenure of office, should have met with universal approbation; but he believed that he should not be contradicted when he asserted, that the large revenue at that prelate's command, and the whole of his time, had been devoted to the advancement of the spiritual and temporal interests of those over whom he presided." After mentioning the causes which made the Bishops of London and Durham anxious to resign their sees, and the circumstances which rendered it necessary for them to seek the sanction of Parliament before doing so, the Chancellor stated, that ample retiring pensions might be provided out of the surplus which would be furnished out of the revenues of their sees after their successors had been paid; and he then proceeded to meet the charge of simony brought against the measure before the House: "It had, he believed, been contended, that this sanction on the part of Parliament was of a simoniacal character; since it was, as it were, bribing these two prelates to retire, by offering them handsome allowances for doing so. This, however, amounted to saying that there were to be no episcopal resignations, unless the bishop were prepared to resign without having the means of support for the rest of his life, which would be equivalent to saying that there was to be no resignation at all."

He added the reason which, in Bishop Blomfield's case, made it imperative that some provision should be made for him before he could resign: "He had been assured, and had no doubt of the fact, that the Bishop of London had never saved any money, except that he had insured his life largely. This necessarily

meant, that to the end of life the person assuring must pay large sums to keep up these insurances. So that the Bishop of London could not retire without making provision for keeping up these payments; and he was informed, that about half the sum proposed to be voted to him would be exhausted in keeping up the insurances which he had properly effected for the support of his wife and family."

The Archbishop of Canterbury defended the bill, on account of the evil of having two such dioceses as London and Durham without episcopal superintendence, and spoke of what he truly conceived to be Bishop Blomfield's own feelings on the subject: "Those of their Lordships who knew the character, the sensitive character, of the Bishop of London, would agree with him, that nothing would be more certain to aggravate the pressure of disease, and to embitter, if not to shorten, what might yet remain to him of life, than the consciousness that he was accountable for duties without the power of performing them—duties of which he knew and had proved the importance and the value. It was from that responsibility that he sought to be relieved; and it would be a bad return for a life spent (if ever life was so spent) in the service of the public—he said the public, for their Lordships knew that his services were no less valuable in that House than in the Church;—it would be an ungrateful return for a life so spent, if he were now denied that comfortable retirement which his health required, and which he had so painfully earned. .... If the Bishop of London had thought himself at liberty to use his episcopal income for the purpose of making for himself a fortune, or of

aggrandizing his family, he might easily have become independent of any retiring salary. He (the Archbishop of Canterbury) might say, without exaggeration, that if he had spared from his public and private charities the half of what he, in fact, employed in supplying the spiritual destitution of his vast diocese, he would have provided against the present emergency. He hoped their Lordships would forgive the right-reverend prelate if he had been more careful to provide for his diocese than for himself or those who surround him."

On the other side, the measure was opposed by some Conservative Peers, then in opposition, and by the Bishops of Exeter and Oxford; the latter of whom, in the debates which took place subsequently, urged the simoniacal argument with such pertinacity, as to provoke a sharp answer from Lord Campbell. "I am quite astonished," exclaimed he, "to hear the right-reverend prelate accusing those members of the Episcopal Bench, who voted for the second reading of this bill, as having supported a measure to encourage simony. If any layman had brought such a charge against the Bench, what would my right-reverend friend have said then? He would have started up as the defender of his order, and would most strongly have reprobated so unfounded an imputation. And is it come to this: *Et tu, Brute!*"

In the House of Commons the bill was opposed, both on the simoniacal ground and on the ground of its not being—what it did not profess to be—a general measure. Mr. Walpole, in defending it, touched upon the reason which, perhaps, lay behind the opposition of some members of both Houses—the unwillingness to place the nomination to two such sees as those of London and

Durham in the hands of a Government which they disliked. "If it be right," said he, "to pass a law, we must entrust the execution of it to the advisers of the Crown, and we must give to the advisers of the Crown no grudging support in carrying it out. For myself, I confine myself to the main question, whether a law is a good one or a bad ; and if I determine that it is a good one, I would entrust its execution to the noble lord at the head of the Government, politically opposed to him as I am, as readily and as confidently as I would to any political friend of my own. I warn the House not to act upon any principle of jealousy. Do not consent to leave these two dioceses without a superintending head, because you have some jealousy of the hands in which the new appointments will be placed."

The opponents of the measure, however, were not numerically very strong, nor were their arguments as cogent as they were imposing. Few really felt bound to wait for a more general measure, and none could seriously suppose that Bishop Blomfield had been guilty of simony, considered as a moral offence. The difficulties supposed to stand in the way were not allowed, by the majority in either House, to countervail the strong practical advantages of the measure before them. The most serious evil resulting from the opposition, was that occasion was taken, both by the Press and by some Members of Parliament, to vilipend the episcopal office, as well as to speak disparagingly of Bishop Blomfield's services to the Church. But this, again, had the effect of calling forth, from those best qualified to speak on the subject, valuable testimony to his zeal, liberality, and conscientiousness.

The Bill was passed by the end of July, and the Bishop proceeded to take the necessary steps for carrying out the act thus sanctioned by the Legislature.

The occasion of his actually completing the deed of resignation, is one which will not soon be forgotten by those who were present at it. He was brought down on his couch into the library at Fulham, the scene of the quiet labours of so many years ; and in the presence of several members of his family ; the Registrar of the diocese, Mr. Shephard ; his private secretaries, Mr. Christopher Hodgson and Mr. Lee ; and his Apparitor, Mr. Lewis, after the deed of resignation had been read aloud by Mr. Hodgson, he affixed his name to it, with a steady hand, but with traces of natural emotion. When the signature was completed, he said,—“ I pray God that what I have now done may be for the good of His Church ! I am conscious that I have left undone many things which I ought to have done, and that many things which I have done might have been done better. I pray that Almighty God will in His mercy forgive me, and that He will assist with His grace my successor, so that He may supply my deficiencies and remedy the consequences of my errors !”

After a pause, he said : “ I wish to take this opportunity, to me a very solemn one, of expressing my thanks to all who have assisted me in the administration of my diocese. To Mr. Hodgson I feel under special obligation for his long and faithful services. Unless he had, I will not say assisted me in, but absolutely relieved me from, the care of the secular affairs, I never could have done what I have of the ecclesiastical duties. I inherited him from my dear and venerated friend, the

late Archbishop ; and I cannot wish better to my successor than that he may receive him as a legacy from me ;"—adding, with a smile, "I only hope he will not have to pay legacy-duty, which, being proportioned to the value of the bequest, might require a larger sum than would be convenient to him." He then turned to his other officers (to each of whom he had directed a book or other remembrance to be given), and took leave of them. To Mr. Shephard he expressed his gratitude for his long and faithful discharge of his duties, saying that he had already conveyed, in writing, the same sentiments to the Chancellor, Dr. Lushington. And to Mr. Lewis (since deceased), the long-tried servant of more than one prelate, he said : "I have an inkstand upstairs for you, Mr. Lewis, on which I have put an inscription. I shall be glad if you will accept it, not in any way as a payment for your very faithful services, but only as a mark of my regard and good wishes."

When these remarks were interrupted by occasional tears, he apologized for his display of feeling, saying : "You must not attribute my emotion to any regret or doubt as to what I have done ; but I have been for some days very nervous."

The document was then conveyed to Lambeth, where the Archbishop was ready to complete the act, by formally accepting the resignation of his suffragan ; and thus the connexion which had existed, almost uninterruptedly, between Bishop Blomfield and the Diocese of London, for more than half a century, was finally brought to a close.

Not so, however, the esteem and honour with which that diocese regarded him. Both privately and publicly,

the Bishop received, on this occasion, abundant testimony that his work of faith and labour of love was not forgotten among those with whom he had acted, and over whom he had been set. The great Church Societies, as well as the clergy of the diocese, forwarded to him, as opportunity arose at their different times of meeting, addresses expressing their sorrow at the termination of their connexion with him, and the loss of his zeal and wisdom in their cause; praying, at the same time, that the years which might yet remain to him might be spent in peace and happiness. So touched was the Bishop with the expressions contained in some of these letters and addresses, that he said: "It is almost worth resigning to find so much kindness from one's friends."

To quote from these addresses would be simply to enumerate, in varying forms of words, the services which Bishop Blomfield rendered to the Church of England, and which have already been recorded in detail in these pages.

But as a specimen, the Address from the Clergy of his Diocese, to the number of between four and five hundred, presented to him three days before his resignation, may be given as it stands:—

*To the Right Honourable and Right Reverend CHARLES JAMES, LORD BISHOP of LONDON, &c. &c. &c.*

We, the Archdeacons, Rural Deans, and undersigned Clergy of the Diocese of London, on the memorable and, to us, deeply affecting occasion of your Lordship's retirement from the superintendence of this Diocese, desire to approach you with the expression of our most affectionate regret.

“Our minds at such a season naturally revert to the multitude of claims upon our respect and gratitude which you have established by a vigilant, able, conscientious, and affectionate administration of the duties of your high office. We have, in the first place, to recognise our personal obligation for the promptitude, patience, and assiduity with which all our applications for advice and assistance have been met, and the admirable judgment which has guided the counsels given to us.

“But more especially as regards the interests of that Church of which we have the privilege to be Ministers, we have to recognise your bold, ready, and powerful assertion of its rights and claims in Parliament—your numerous Sermons, Charges, and publications in reply to its opponents, and in vindication of its discipline and doctrines—your personal addresses at public meetings held in behalf of the various objects most deeply affecting the honour of God and the welfare of society—your strenuous and successful labours in the cause of Christian Missions—your liberal contributions for the furtherance of the objects thus earnestly commended by you to others—the assistance freely and munificently rendered in the erection of Churches and Schools in the Metropolis and other parts of the Diocese—the special erection and endowment at your sole charge of the Church of St. Stephen, Hammersmith—and the leading part which you have always taken in securing the incorporation of religious with secular education in the great public institutions of the country.

“The remembrance of these and other labours, by which your Lordship has largely contributed both to the general interests of religion and to our own personal



advantage and comfort, cannot but fill us with the deepest sorrow on the contemplation of your retirement from an office, the duties of which you have for twenty-eight years so admirably discharged.

“We cannot bid you farewell without the expression of our earnest desire and prayer, that you may carry into private life the cheering recollection of having left behind you a large body of Clergy and Laymen, deeply impressed with the value of your guidance and sympathy—that the Father of Mercies may bestow richly upon yourself the consolation which you have endeavoured to impart to others—that you may have the comfort of knowing that your precepts and exhortations have not been lost upon us—that the Diocese whose interests you have so earnestly cherished is largely prospering in the hands of your successor—and that he has found a body of Clergy and Laity prepared by their respect and affection for yourself, to co-operate in every plan which may be proposed by him, for the advancement of Christ’s kingdom upon earth, and especially for the well-being of that great Metropolis, with which your name will be honourably associated throughout all generations.”

The Bishop’s reply to this address, which he partly wrote with his own hand, and partly dictated, is added here, both from its own interest, and as showing that no decay of mind had as yet accompanied the physical weakness which compelled him to resign his arduous office :—

“REVEREND AND DEAR BRETHREN—I have been deeply touched and gratified by your kind address on my intended Resignation of the See of London.

"I had long felt that the duties of that See required all the energy and activity of a younger and stronger man than myself; and it has pleased God to visit me with such a measure of sickness and infirmity as not only to justify me in seeking to be relieved from a burden which has become too heavy for me, but to impose upon me the absolute necessity of doing so.

"An Act of Parliament has been passed enabling me to resign my Bishopric. For the provisions of that Act I have great cause to be thankful; though I must confess that I would rather have seen a general measure applicable, with certain safeguards, to the case of *all* Bishops of our Church disabled by age or infirmity from the active discharge of their duties.

"Nothing short of a real and urgent necessity would have induced me to take a step, which would be painful under any circumstances, and which is rendered peculiarly so by the fact of its involving my separation from a body of clergymen with whom I have been connected by a sacred bond of union for eight-and-twenty years, whom I have always regarded as brethren and friends, and who have always evinced a corresponding feeling in their conduct towards me.

"The relation of a Bishop to the Clergy of his diocese presents so many occasions for an interchange of kind acts and offices, that he may sometimes earn for himself, by a friendly bearing towards them, a more favourable opinion than the performance of his more public duties might seem to justify. It is, therefore, very gratifying to me to be assured that your kind feeling towards me, has arisen from both considerations.

"The long experience of my earlier clerical life, as

curate and incumbent, gave me peculiar facilities for knowing the duties and appreciating the difficulties and wants of the parochial clergy. If at any time I have failed to show in my conduct towards them that I had profited by such experience, I hope they will believe that such failure was not occasioned by any want of real sympathy with them in their labours and trials.

“Let me add that I am not conscious of having ever allowed any difference of opinion upon matters not affecting the foundation or essential doctrines of our holy faith, to influence my conduct towards any individual of my clergy, but that I looked only to his faithfulness and diligence in winning souls to Christ.

“I earnestly hope and pray that the kindly feelings which you have at all times manifested towards me may cheer and facilitate the labours of your new diocesan. I have ventured to assure him that the attachment which I had reason to believe the clergy of the diocese felt towards me would, I was persuaded, induce them to receive my successor with cordial respect and deference.

“Suffer me, brethren, in addressing you for the last time as your Bishop, to remind you of the high and weighty trust committed to each of you by the Chief Shepherd of the sheep. I may specially urge on you the importance of that which I dwelt upon at some length in my Charge delivered at my last Visitation, the constant personal intercourse which ought to subsist between a clergyman and his flock. Nothing can adequately supply the place of a zealous and active body of parochial clergymen, carrying the truths and consolations of religion to the homes of their neighbours, especially the poor, and so awakening them by degrees to a sense of

their spiritual wants, and exciting in them a longing for the more solemn and authoritative teaching of the Church in her offices and in the public preaching of God's word. At present there is little prospect of such an increase in the number of parochial clergymen as may fully supply this need; but I am thankful for what has already been done in the way of church extension, and earnestly hope that the work may go forward with increasing energy and success, and it is one which I heartily recommend as deserving of your cordial co-operation and support. I believe we may look for assistance and encouragement from the Christian community so long as they see that we are faithful to our ministerial trust, and to the principles of our Reformed Church; combating, on the one hand, infidelity, ignorance, and vice; and, on the other hand, guarding our flocks against the errors and superstitions of Rome, by whom the Church of England is justly regarded as the firmest bulwark of Protestantism.

"In conclusion, brethren, I commend you to the Grace of God; and earnestly pray that the Holy Spirit may abundantly bless your labours for the good of that Church over which He has made you overseers, to feed it with the wholesome food of His pure Word and Sacraments; and that, by your sound doctrine and godly example, you may save both yourselves and them that hear you.

"And now, desiring your continued prayers on my behalf, I bid you, reverend and dear brethren, an affectionate farewell.

"(Signed)

C. J. LONDON.

"FULHAM PALACE, *Sept.* 27, 1856."

At the same time that he was finally released from the superintendence of his diocese, Bishop Blomfield tendered to the Queen his resignation of the Deanery of the Chapels Royal, an office usually annexed to the Bishopric of London. Her Majesty, however, was graciously pleased to intimate to him that, as the duties of the office were not onerous, she did not wish that one who had been so long connected with the Royal Household should be compelled to break off the connexion, and she desired that he would retain the deanery. Bishop Blomfield felt and expressed his gratitude to her Majesty for this mark of kindness and consideration.

The office of Dean of the Chapels Royal had not been, in the hands of Bishop Blomfield, a complete sinecure. He had busied himself in improving the efficiency of the choir at the chapel in St. James's Palace, and he very frequently, when in London, attended the services there. Finding, when he had been some years Bishop of London, that the officers of this chapel were very inadequately paid, he offered to the Home Secretary of the day to resign the salary attached to the office of Dean—about £200 a year—on condition that it should be applied in augmenting their stipends. The offer was accepted, but the condition was never fulfilled.

## CHAPTER XII.

LAST MONTHS OF BISHOP BLOMFIELD'S LIFE—HIS FINAL ATTACK—  
HIS DEATH — AND FUNERAL — MEMORIALS — TRIBUTES TO HIS  
MEMORY—CONCLUSION.

THUS he who had been known to the world so long as the Bishop of London, retired from his high position, and once more, after thirty-three years, signed his name as Charles James *Blomfield*—the first Bishop of that ancient see, who, when he found himself unable to discharge the duties which he owed to it, had resigned his high honours, and with them two-thirds of his income. So associated had his name become with the diocese over which he presided, that men found it hard to remember, that though no longer Bishop of London, he was still a *Bishop*, his consecration being indelible; and that, if it had pleased God to restore him to health, he would still have been capable of performing all episcopal functions, although possessing no episcopal jurisdiction.

No such restoration, however, was in store for him. At first, he seemed the better for having completed the act of resignation; perhaps, because his mind was now relieved from the thought of duties which he had no power of performing. But, on the whole, he remained after his resignation much in the same state as in the previous twelve months. He was still perfectly help-

less, and at times suffered great pain; he still derived comfort from the Scriptures and prayers which were read in his sick-room, and from the occasional reception of the Holy Communion; and he still found amusement in the works of fiction, or the books of a more solid kind, which were read to him by his sons and daughters, his *ἀνάγνωσαι*, as he called them. It is remembered by those who were with him, that at this time Mr. Nassau Senior lent for this purpose the manuscript of his interesting diary in France, which has since been published. The Bishop, too, had now the singular privilege of hearing his own biography read during his lifetime. Dr. Biber had originally contributed to the *English Churchman* a sketch of Bishop Blomfield's public life; and this was published in a single volume in 1857, and was read to the Bishop. He listened with great attention, and confirmed the general accuracy of Dr. Biber's account, remarking here and there where an error seemed to have crept in.

Thus the months wore on, in the quiet retirement of Fulham, in a forced inactivity so different from that to which the Bishop had been accustomed, till the summer of 1857. When July arrived, he was, though his friends did not know it, fast drawing to his end.

On the 30th of that month he seemed less well than usual. In the morning some relations came to visit him. He seemed, as usual, glad to see them, and made some playful remarks to a little grandson, whose childish simplicity and fancy for "seeing *my* grandpapa" seemed always to please him.

When he was carried back to his bed (which, during the summer, had been placed in the Porteus library) he

seemed cheerful, and one of his daughters remarked that, both then and when she took leave of him, he did not say, as he so often did, that he "was very ill, and should never see her again."

It had been the Bishop's custom throughout his illness to have read to him, with some slight alterations, the Confession and the Absolution in the Communion Service, with the Lord's Prayer, and a prayer from the Visitation of the Sick, or sometimes the "Prayer for a Sick Relation," from his own Manual of Prayers. For the last week or ten days he had expressed a strong desire that his children should come into his room before he went to sleep, to join in these prayers; and, fearful lest his desire might not be sufficiently impressed on their minds, he called, on this evening, the only one who happened to be in at the time, after she had taken leave of him for the night, and said, "My dear child, I wish you to come *every* evening, when your dear mother reads prayers with me, and all my children who can. I hope, my dear child, you will comply with my wish."

For a week or two past his friends had been meditating a move to Sydenham for change of air, more for the sake of those who attended him, than from any hope that it would cause a material improvement in his own state. Hitherto he had evinced a strong, and not unnatural, dislike to any change of place, and a dread of being removed from Fulham, lest he should never be enabled to return to it again. Now, however, he expressed the strongest desire to be removed; and, as his pain increased, he became restlessly impatient for something to be settled, and desired that if a house could not be



found, rooms should be taken in the hotel at Sydenham, adding that it was to him "a matter of life and death."

On the evening of the next day the prayers were read to him as usual. All who knew him well will remember his sensitive dislike to bad English, or to any language which failed exactly to express the sentiments it was intended to convey; and, during his illness, this peculiarity had increased to an almost morbid excess, so that even when the Bible or some of the Church Prayers were being read to him, he would stop the reader to remark on the real meaning of a word, or the construction of a sentence; and a casual observer, unacquainted with his peculiarities, or with the real character of his mind, might sometimes have been led to think that he attended rather to the letter than to the spirit of what was read.

But the words of Life, studied in the spirit of prayer, had long ago entered into his soul, and dwelt there. In the long and painful night watches, his friends now know, from an assurance which once fell from his own lips, that he who spoke to those nearest and dearest to him so little of his inner life, and who now often appeared unable, from pain and weariness, to enter into what was read to him by others, was constantly lifting up his soul, though his lips were silent, in communion with his God and Saviour; and that never a night passed but the words of the Psalmist were rising from his heart, "Have mercy upon me, O God, after Thy great goodness." Not until his illness did any know that during many years of his life this fifty-first Psalm had been his nightly prayer.

It was on this same evening, too, while the prayers

were being read, that he interrupted them by calling to the nurse who attended him. And then with that characteristic love of explaining to others the meaning of expressions that they might use in ignorance, and with the equally characteristic gentleness of manner which marked his mode of teaching, he began to explain to the nurse that the words in the general confession, "*there is no health in us,*" did not refer to our bodily, but to our spiritual health, and proceeded to show "how vile our earthly nature is, and that there is no cure for us but in the atoning blood of Christ, no hope but, for His sake, in the infinite mercy of God, for that of ourselves we can deserve nothing but punishment."

When those who were with him rose from their knees, and bade him "good night," he took leave of them with all his old tenderness of manner. They were simple words and expressions of affection that he used, and such as his children had been accustomed to hear and to receive from him for many years, but they remembered them then, because these were almost the last words (except in short and incoherent sentences) which he addressed to them. At the time, it was his manner which especially struck them, more completely that of his own old self than they had noticed for some time, the energetic earnestness of his natural character adding force to his tenderness. Afterwards, when his wife bade him "good night," he detained her; and, drawing her to him, told her, in a low but distinct voice, that "he felt he had been a great sinner—none could know his sins better than he did himself; that repentance was a hard thing, but that he trusted humbly he had truly repented, and that he had a perfect trust in the mercy

of God, through the merits of his blessed Saviour ; that he was at peace with all the world ; that he had not an unkind feeling towards any ; and that if there were any who had ever acted unkindly towards him, any who had entertained hard thoughts of him, he forgave them from the bottom of his heart." There was in these words no quick expression, extorted by pain and weariness, no strong assertion that he "had not an hour to live ;" but a solemn declaration of his faith, and a genuine expression of the state of his heart, spoken with a grave tenderness, and a calm earnestness, which was deeply touching and affecting.

Such signs might naturally have prepared the Bishop's friends, if not for the end, at least for some great change. But they had been so accustomed during his illness to hear him speak of dying, so used to unaccountable and rapid changes of manner, that they did not attach that full weight to his words and expressions which a stranger might have done. Indeed, his own apprehensions of his approaching end were not then fully known to them. It was on the same night that he told his attendant, "I am nearer to my end than they think." But it was not until after his death that she told of these forewarning words.

Next day, Sunday, he seemed better ; but in the afternoon he was suddenly taken with a fit. His medical attendant, Dr. Todd, pronounced this seizure to be epileptic, and similar to one which he had had in May, and said that he hoped he would recover from this attack as he had done from the former one, although, probably, not so rapidly. If the Bishop got over this he *might* live for years.

There was, however, evidently much cause for anxiety now. He talked at times in a rambling, incoherent manner, distressing to those around him. At other times he lay in a half doze, but with a pulse so high as to indicate danger. At last, on the morning of Tuesday, August 4th, it was thought necessary to summon to him all the near relations who were within reach.

The same day he had another fit ; and he lay now still, but breathing hard : his complexion, naturally so clear and fair, with that black shade over it which seems to tell that the Angel of Death is passing near, but still able to recognise the different members of his family as they came in one by one ; and to follow the commendatory prayer which the Vicar of Fulham read at his bedside, and close it with an audible "Amen."

By the evening of the same day all his children, with their husbands and wives, had arrived to be present at his closing hours, except two sons—one of whom was commanding his ship in the Mediterranean, while the other, having started for the Continent a few days before immediate danger was anticipated, could only be recalled in time to see his father's lifeless form before it was laid in the grave.

The dying Bishop lay in the chapel-like room (it had once, indeed, been used as a chapel) in which are arranged the books which Bishop Porteus bequeathed to the See. To this room the invalid had been removed for coolness ; and as the night wore away, the fresh breeze, which had succeeded a sultry day, stole in from the garden through the great open window at the lower end. On one side of the room, the windows are embla-

zoned with the armorial bearings of different prelates ; and around it are placed the portraits of all the bishops of London since the Reformation, the last vacant space having lately been filled by the portrait of Bishop Blomfield himself. All are there—Ridley the Martyr, Sandys and Grindal, the ambitious Laud, Juxon the friend of Charles I., Compton who had adorned the Palace-gardens with their rare and stately trees, the statesman Robinson, the learned Gibson, the divines Sherlock and Lowth, the mild and amiable Porteus, who loved Fulham so well, and thanked God, the evening before his death, that he had been suffered to return thither to die ; and Bishop Blomfield's predecessor and friend, the venerable Primate, William Howley. Surrounded by the likenesses of these and many others, one who had ruled the diocese for a longer period than almost any of them, and of whom, without disparagement to his predecessors, it might truly be said that he had "laboured more abundantly than they all"—lay with life slowly ebbing away from him, his family around him watching the slow progress of death, which they could do nothing to avert.

As the next day dawned he seemed to revive a little, and to be conscious when those about him spoke to him or prayed for him : once, indeed, they fancied that in the faint whisper which they caught from his lips, he uttered the words, "I am dying." A few hours later he relapsed, and the physicians pronounced all consciousness to be gone. His children still stood round his bed, and moistened his lips ; but he was now too far gone to know that he was still being ministered to. At five o'clock on the evening of

Wednesday, August 5th, with one slight convulsion, which marked the parting of body and soul, he breathed his last. No sooner was the death-struggle over, than his features seemed to regain the early beauty of which age and sickness had deprived them; his fine forehead, so often lately contracted with pain, lay smoothed and unwrinkled as an infant's; all appearance of paralysis had passed away; and the lifeless face, in its placid composure, seemed in a moment to have lost twenty years of its age.

The Bishop's family remained together after his death, and partook of the Holy Communion in the chapel of the palace on the following Sunday, from the hands of the Vicar of Fulham. On Tuesday, August 11th, the funeral took place. By the deceased Prelate's express desire, it was simple and unadorned. The coffin was carried through the garden into the churchyard, followed by all the Bishop's sons and daughters, except one unavoidably absent, the last office of the Church being read by the Vicar. Several Bishops of London are buried in the eastern part of the churchyard, beneath the chancel-window; but no space had been retained there for the graves of future prelates; and Bishop Blomfield was laid in a plot of ground which he had himself consecrated as an addition to the churchyard some few years before, beside the palace-moat, and with the trees of the garden overshadowing his tomb. Thus was fulfilled the desire which the Bishop had himself expressed, that he might be allowed to die and be buried at the home which he had loved so well. When he heard of the clause in the Retirement Bill which enabled him to retain Fulham, and of which

he knew nothing till the Bill was passed, he said to a friend, "Have they told you what kindness the Government has shown me in enabling me to remain at Fulham? It is a great relief to me; for I could not have borne to leave it; and I should not then even have had a right to be buried here, where I had hoped to die;" and here his voice was choked with sobs.

Although the funeral was a private one, there was no want of indication that Bishop Blomfield was not forgotten in his death. A large number of the clergy assembled, at the invitation of the Vicar, to testify their respect to their late Diocesan, by being present at the burial in their gowns. Many of the poor of the parish also attended, in such mourning as they could afford; and many of the school children were sent by their parents. Many shops had been half-closed during the week, and the church-bell had rung at midnight since the day of the Bishop's death.

A simple tombstone of white marble, designed by one of the Bishop's sons, has since been erected over the grave. The centre of the headstone displays the cross, with the crown of thorns, and the monogram I. H. S.: upon the tomb itself is sculptured the episcopal crosier, interlaced with a ribbon bearing the Bishop's favourite text (which he had chosen as the motto to accompany his arms in the windows of the palace chapel), "*Vigilando et orando*;" on the side are recorded his name, and the dates of his birth, his consecration to the See of Chester, his translation to that of London, and his death; while below runs the text which the Church of England has chosen as the consolation of her mourners, and which is specially appropriate to such a life as

Bishop Blomfield's,—“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; even so, saith the Spirit, *for they rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.*”

In the belfry of the church, another monument, designed by the same hand, has been erected at the expense of the principal parishioners of Fulham, in the form of a mural brass, surmounted by a canopy, and bearing an inscription which commemorates the special benefits which the long residence of Bishop Blomfield conferred upon the parish.

A memorial of a more public character, erected by the subscriptions of the friends and admirers of Bishop Blomfield, is being designed by Mr. George Richmond, R.A., and will shortly be placed in St. Paul's Cathedral. A recumbent effigy of the Bishop, vested in his episcopal robes, lies upon a low couch, as if stricken down while still engaged in the duties of his office. A pastoral staff lies broken by his side. Thus the artist has endeavoured to express the abrupt termination of Bishop Blomfield's labours by illness, so long before his death. The expression given to the countenance is that of resignation, and cheerful acceptance of the blow which has laid him low. Singularly enough, he will be the first Bishop of London who is commemorated by a monument in the cathedral church of the diocese.

Among the expressions of sympathy which the family of the Bishop received on the occasion of his death, hardly any, perhaps, was more valuable than an address to his widow, voluntarily offered by the parishioners, including many poor, of St. Thomas', Bethnal Green (the last of the ten new churches), who had not for-



gotten the debt of gratitude which they owed to him for his exertions in promoting what they called "the revival of Christianity in Bethnal Green."

In the same parish, which has so much cause to remember Bishop Blomfield with gratitude, an attempt has been made to perpetuate his memory, in the way which would have pleased him most, by the establishment of a "Memorial Fund," which is expended chiefly in assisting the national schools of the district.

The testimony which is borne to the merits of a good man after his death, is valuable in proportion to the means which those who bear it possessed of knowing his real character by personal intercourse. Some weight, therefore, may be given to the words in which those who knew Bishop Blomfield long and intimately speak of what he was and what he did. Mr. Harvey, the Rector of Hornsey, who had been the Bishop's curate at Bishopsgate, and had retained his friendship ever since, spoke thus of him at the time when he was just resigning his bishopric:—

"Let me claim your sympathy and ask your prayers for him who for nearly twenty-eight years has presided over us as chief pastor of the diocese, but is purposing shortly to close his connexion with us for good. In most, if not in all points, he is one who has exemplified the apostolical description of a Bishop, and has promoted, at home and abroad, almost beyond his ability, the spread of his Master's kingdom. A lover of hospitality, a lover of good men; not given to filthy lucre, not covetous; sober, just, holy, temperate; apt to teach, not a novice; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught—

I know not in what terms, making of course due allowance for human imperfection, I could better describe my former rector, my present Bishop, my constant friend, than in these words of the Apostle. Few men have so large a heart: none a more affectionate spirit. Candid almost to a fault, and of liberality most abounding, he has ever been most humble before God, and most hospitable towards man. Naturally of a somewhat hasty spirit, of which he himself was always the most conscious, he learned effectually to rule it; and his chief haste has long been to perform six days' work in the space of one. No one could be more kind to those who differed from him: no one was ever more helpful to those who laboured with him. The world is a hard master to serve; and it judges as harshly as it rules us; but it forms a right judgment at the last; and, whatever some men may think or say, our present Bishop will hold one of the highest places as a devoted and single-hearted pastor in the judgment of posterity. If men wish fully to appreciate his character, let them go to that parish in which I was first connected with him, and they will learn how truly another part of the Apostle's description of a Bishop was fulfilled in him: 'Moreover he must have a good report of them that are without.' I speak from my own personal knowledge,—and behold, before God, I lie not,—when I say that he was beloved by men of all parties, and of no party—Jew, infidel, and heretic, no less than the churchman and nonconformist among Christians; and that my chief fear on his account was, then, that all men spake well of him."

One who had known him equally well, the Vicar of Fulham, preaching on the occasion of his death, thus

described the inner character of him whose energies had been seen in so much outward work.

“Would you know what was the mainspring of all these movements which we have enumerated in our great Prelate? Occupying a station which brought him into incessant contact with persons of every rank, and of every variety of disposition and attainment (for though he fulfilled strictly that rule of the Apostle laid down for the guidance of those in every age of his high order in the Church, that he was *a lover of good men*, yet he repelled none of any character whom he thought himself likely to benefit); do you ask how it was that, in the midst of all these collisions and connexions, with a temper naturally quick and ardent, he scarcely ever made an enemy, and never, no, never lost a friend? Above all, do you wish to know why it was that in so many of his enterprises it pleased God so wonderfully to prosper him? It was simply for this reason, which you may carry with you into your own lives, every one who hears me, from the highest and the lowest;—you may carry it, with entire confidence, believe me, into your counting-houses, or your shops, your marts, your gardens, and your families, and you may calculate upon the same results;—it was because of the singleness and straightforwardness of purpose which he maintained; honouring God, and never regarding the opinions of men; never thinking of himself, but of the supreme importance of the objects he aimed at, and of the most legitimate means by which they might be attained.

“And there is one other chord to be touched still. Bear with me while I strike it, for it suggests a thought

which may be equally profitable to us all. He was all that we loved, because he lived as he died, in the spirit of that precept which he gained from his Saviour's lips, and of which the words will shortly be inscribed upon his tomb—*Watch and pray.*"

Again, some points in the Bishop's character, which were not perhaps obvious to those who knew him little, were well touched by his valued friend, Archdeacon Sinclair :—

"The somewhat abrupt manner of my departed friend might not lead the casual observer to suppose him possessed of the kind-hearted sensibility which really belonged to him. The emotion which on some occasions he could not suppress in public, and which caused surprise to strangers, was entirely in accordance with his habitual feelings and private deportment. Often as I have seen him for many years in the intimacy of domestic life, I do not remember having heard him utter in his family a single word that he or they could seriously wish unsaid. Few men more deserved, by substantial and unvarying kindness, the attachment of their friends. And his dependents, while they stood in awe of his authority, were affectionately sensible of his considerate care for all that concerned their real welfare."

"The world," writes another friend, "knows his ability, his unwearied energy, his uprightness and justice, and something of his munificence and disinterestedness: even party spirit will admit this now. But the world cannot know his pervading piety, his deep humility, and the springs of sympathy and loving-kindness which lay so near the surface of his character, and gushed out so freely at the least touch of others' joys and sorrows."

One whom circumstances had long estranged from Bishop Blomfield thus spoke of him after his death :—

“Let me say that years of separation have not in the least diminished the affection and respect I have felt for him. It has been my pleasure so to speak of him to those who knew not his worth ; and when duty towards God compelled me to sacrifice the confidence and friendship of many, he and one other were those whom I felt most pained to grieve.”

“So,” said another of his early friends, Archdeacon Hale, who had been present in his sick room a few hours before his death—“so ended the life of one of the most laborious and energetic of our bishops ; one of the best of parish priests ; one of the most eminent scholars ; one of the most simple-hearted of mankind ; one of the firmest of friends. He is gone to his reward.”

But the best memorial of Bishop Blomfield will be found in the works which he has left behind him. When we look round upon the diocese of London, and see the churches which owe their erection to his exertions, and the religious societies and charitable which have received stability from his counsels, and vigour from his labours on their behalf ; when we see the numbers, both of clergy and laity, on whose minds the recollection of the Bishop's generous heart and clear head,—of his prompt sympathy, ready aid, and just, if sometimes strict, exercise of authority,—is still fresh, we may say of him, with truth, *Si monumentum requiris, circumspice*. But the benefits which Bishop Blomfield conferred upon the Church of England were

not confined to his own diocese, nor even to his own country; many a distant congregation of Englishmen, where the faith as well as the enterprise of the mother country has now established itself in its entirety, will long remember with gratitude the name of the man who quickened into new life the flagging energies of our Colonial Church.

It may be thought that the life of Bishop Blomfield, beginning as it did at a period as different, perhaps, in its ideas and habits from our own as though it were separated from us by a much greater interval of time, can present but few points for the imitation of English Churchmen in the seventh decade of the nineteenth century. True it is, that although Bishop Blomfield was as much abreast of his age as any living prelate, yet some of the schemes which he designed for the good of the Church are unsuited to the changed complexion of later times, while others were abandoned even by himself. But though the particular works on which he set the most value may, in some instances, have had their day, the example of the great qualities which he displayed in all that he did, remains the same. The same honesty, truthfulness, industry, generosity, hopefulness, which he first displayed in the field of classical scholarship, remained equally his characteristics throughout his long subsequent career as a clergyman and a bishop. Commencing his ministerial labours at a time when one so clear-sighted and well-informed as he was might with some reason have despaired, humanly speaking, of the English Church, he himself, by his writing and unselfish labours did as much as any one man could do towards

raising her to the much more hopeful position which she occupies at the present moment. Early in his clerical life, speaking of the then disorganized and torpid condition of the Church, he said, "It is not yet too late for us to put fresh incense into our censers, and to stand between the dead and the living;" and no man ever more fully acted up to the spirit of his own words. Through the various dangers which, during nearly half a century, beset the English Church from within and from without—through evil report and good report—with a varying measure of success, but with unvarying energy and faithfulness, he did with his might whatever his hand found to do; and when no longer able to labour in his Master's cause, anxious that His Church should not suffer from the loss even of one of its chief pastors, he resigned his work into younger hands, and prepared, through months of pain and weakness, to render an account of his long stewardship. And his life will not have been lived in vain, nor the record of it written to no purpose, if his example stimulate any one of the sons of that Church which he loved so well, to a more abundant zeal in those labours of love, of which, though the outward effects may sometimes seem but small, we doubt not that the seed is, indeed, springing up in the hearts of Christ's people among us, and bringing forth fruit unto eternal life.

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## NOTE TO PAGE 165.

A QUARTERLY paper of the London Diocesan Church Building Society, published while these sheets were passing through the press, calls attention to the similarity of the views on Church Extension expressed by the present Bishop of London, in his Charge of 1862, with those of Bishop Blomfield. In that Charge Bishop Tait says :—

“ We are deeply convinced, that our own parochial system, carrying with it, besides churches and clergy, schools, and a hundred arrangements of charity and philanthropy, gives the best hope of aiding our people for time and for eternity. It is difficult to conceive what a city of between two and three millions of inhabitants must become, if it be not broken up into manageable districts, each placed under the superintendence of men, whose mission it is to labour in every way for the social and religious improvement of the people. Without this, no regulations of a well-organized police, no array of magistrates, will avail to repress crime, and bind the State together. Nay, without this, we do not see how a really efficient and kindly system of relief, even of the people's temporal wants, can be maintained in vigour. A vast proportion of our poor in London come from country towns, where they have been accustomed to their parish church, and all the kindly influences which gather round it. Shall we suffer them to join us in a great army, adding to us yearly what is sufficient for the population of a large new city : and shall their advent to our neighbourhood deprive them of religious and social blessings which they might have enjoyed at home ? If we neglect them, it will be at the peril of the nation. In support of no nobler cause—



to meet no more pressing necessity, can we call upon the wealthy and the comfortable to spare of their abundance, that they may bless the poor, and, through the blessings given to them, save the State from great trials."

After quoting the sentiments on this subject expressed by Bishop Blomfield in his last Charge, the writer proceeds as follows :—

"We refer with much interest to Bishop Blomfield's last Charge, not only because it contains a brief history of Church Extension in the diocese from 1836 to 1854, but also on account of the identity of view presented between himself and Bishop Tait, which cannot fail to carry conviction to every impartial mind. And this is the more remarkable from the circumstances under which Bishop Tait assumed the oversight of the diocese. Coming from a distance, and not having been in any way connected with the measures which had been adopted, he was enabled from the first to exercise an entirely unbiassed and independent judgment. When, therefore, we find him, after the actual experience of some years, endorsing the views of his predecessor, both as to the wants of the diocese, and their appropriate remedies, we feel that we can scarcely overestimate the value of this concurrence of opinion. In years gone by, it was frequently painful to listen to the objections to Bishop Blomfield's plans, emanating from persons whose judgment on other subjects we were accustomed to respect; and we can never cease to deplore the too certain results of this opposition in its chilling effect on public opinion, and in the difficulties which it threw, for many years, in the path of the Bishop, discouraging and disheartening him, while he knew that every year was precious, and that no time was to be lost in providing for the ever-rising tide of population. The evils of half-incredulity, and of 'passive resistance,' as it has not inaptly been called, have not wholly passed away. They are still to be traced in the feeble support accorded to general measures of Church Extension

by the inhabitants of the metropolis. Now, however, that we have a second bishop urging the same important facts upon the attention of his clergy, and through them upon that of the diocese at large, may we not hope that the realities of the need, in all its magnitude, will no longer be considered open to question, and that the remedies approved by both these high authorities will receive the adhesion and advocacy of those whose exertions are essential to their success ?”

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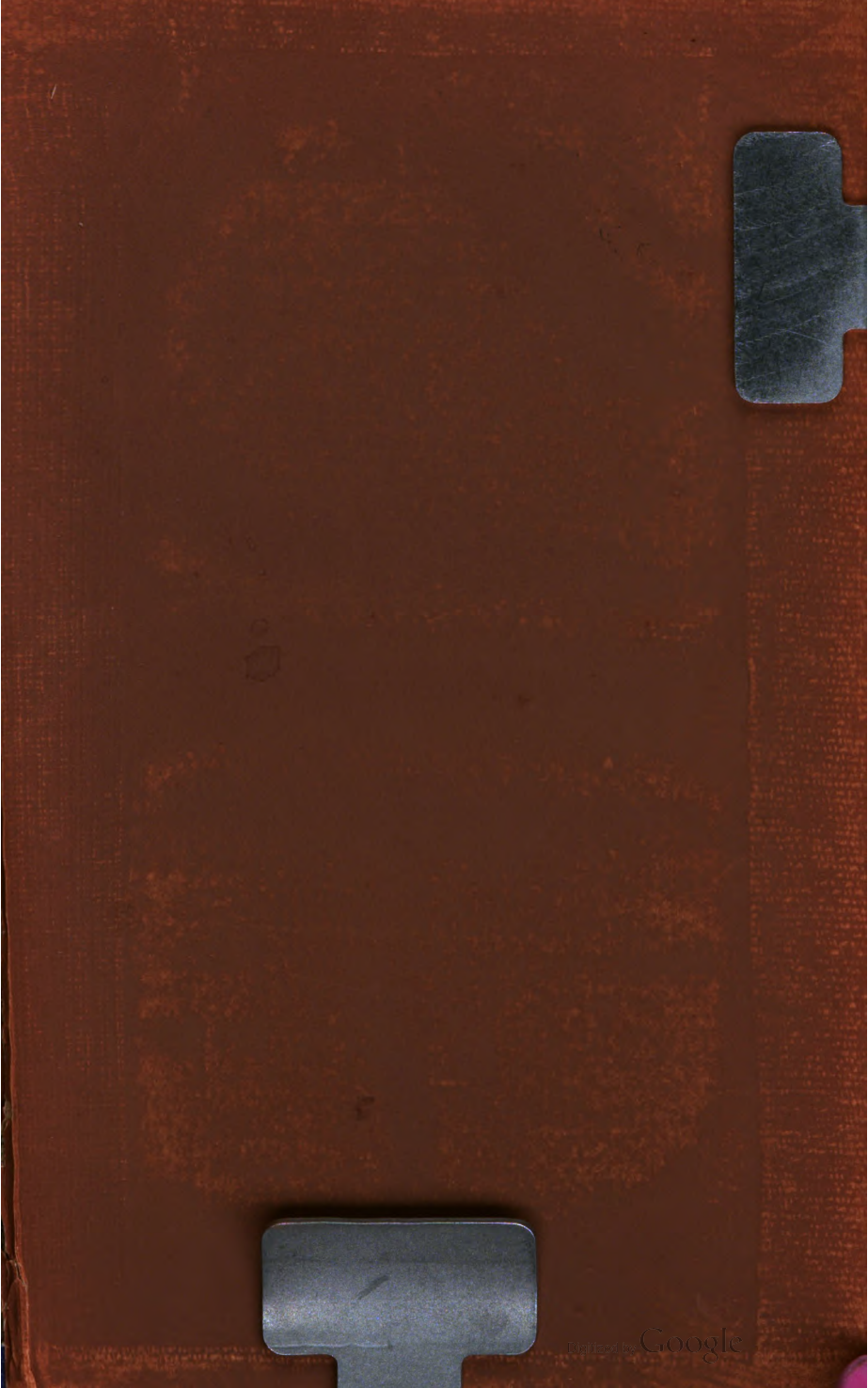
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